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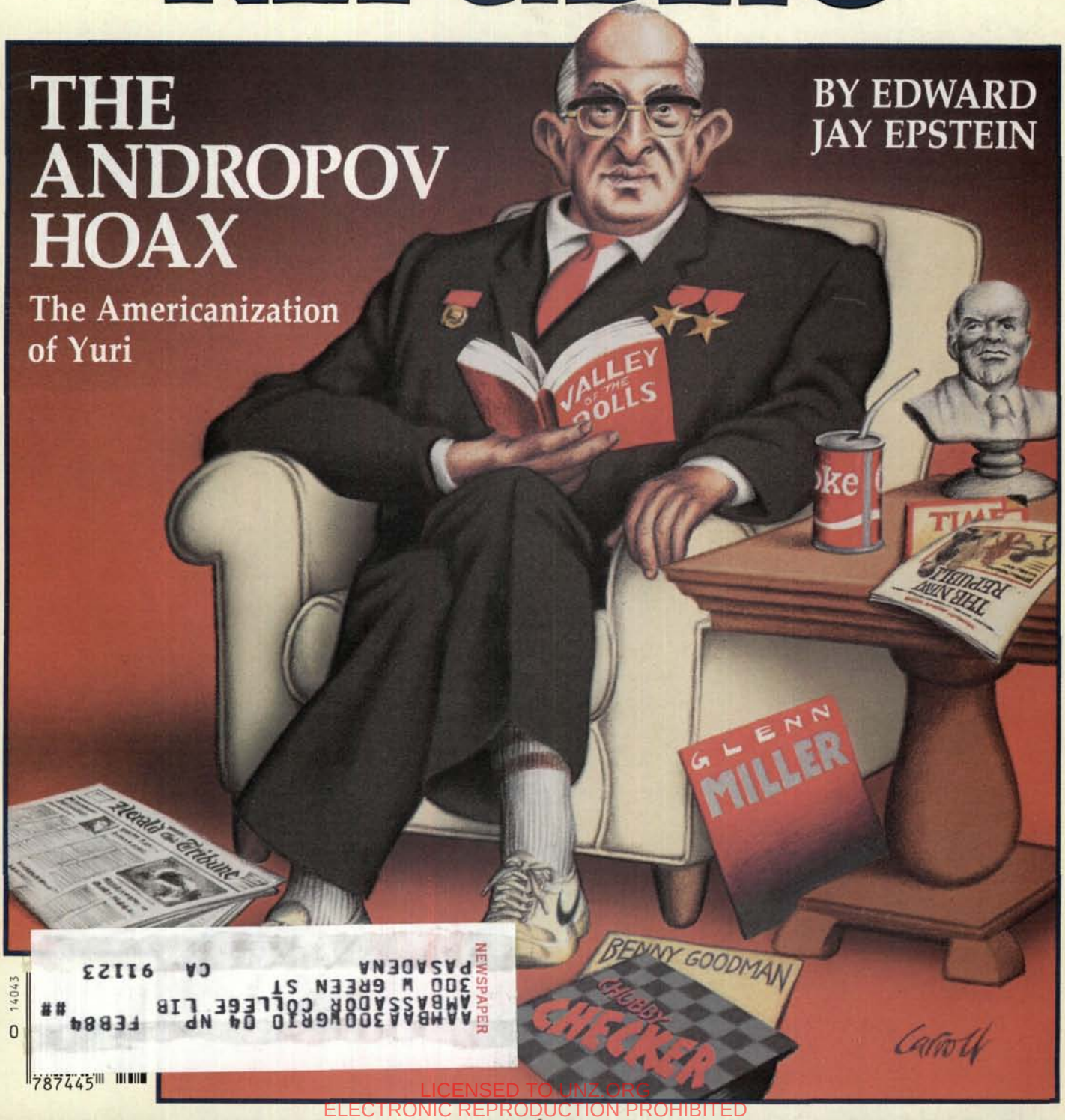
THE NEW REPUBLIC



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Answers to the

IS CIGARETTE ADVERTISING A MAJOR REASON WHY KIDS SMOKE? NO.

Advertising is consistently ranked among the least important factors influencing college students to start smoking, according to a study by a professor of psychology who heads a prominent university research center.

That finding is typical. Because the fact is, cigarette advertising is not designed to induce people to start smoking, kids or anybody else. Its objective is to promote brand identification and brand loyalty among people who already smoke.

So why do kids start smoking? In a recent study of teenage smoking habits in which 1500 students were interviewed, the

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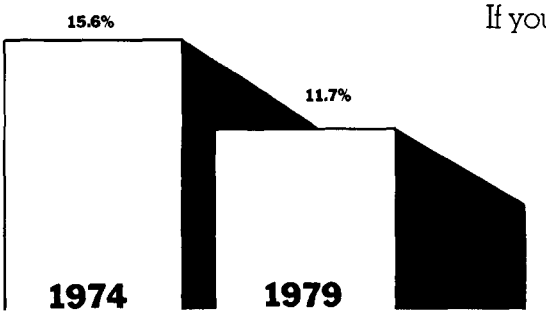
most asked questions about cigarettes.

students themselves named peer pressure as the most important influence in the initiation of smoking.

In a statement submitted at a recent congressional hearing, a noted California psychologist said that smoking behavior is a complex behavior determined by the interaction of several influences. This expert concluded that no single factor determines smoking behavior all the time.

Whatever the reasons for smoking may be, research shows that the smoking rate among teenagers has declined in the last several years. According to an American Cancer Society report based on a Government-funded study, teenage male smoking rates have dropped by one third to the lowest level since 1964.

This study revealed that during 1974-79, the relative decrease in smoking rates among teenage males was 32 percent. Among teenage females, 17 percent. Overall (see chart), the relative decrease among teenagers was 25 percent.



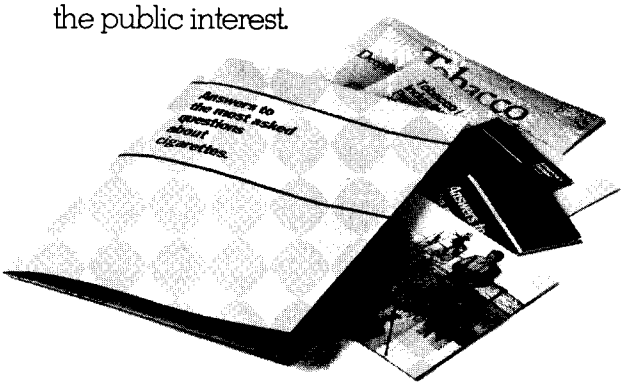
The relative decrease among teenage smokers was 25 percent during 1974-79.
Source: 1979 "Teenage Smoking" study for U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

A more recent study conducted for a Government agency showed continuing declines among teenagers through 1981.

We think that's good. Because we think kids should not smoke. Smoking is an adult custom based on mature and informed judgment.

If you'd like to know more about this and other issues, write for our free information kit, "Answers to the most asked questions about cigarettes." Address: The Tobacco Institute, Suite 82M,1875 Eye St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006.

We offer it in the belief that full and free discussion of this important public issue is in the public interest.



WEIGH BOTH SIDES BEFORE YOU TAKE SIDES.

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CORRESPONDENCE

SOCIAL INSECURITY

To the editors:

Bob Kuttner suggests in "Social Security Hysteria" (TNR, December 27, 1982) that Social Security's problems have been exaggerated by myself and others. He states that right now Social Security consumes about 5 percent of G.N.P. and that "after the year 2020, even under fairly pessimistic assumptions, it will consume all of 6 percent." So what's all the fuss about?

Regrettably, Mr. Kuttner's characterization represents the kind of understatement of the problem that many public officials choose to believe. First, the figures he cites ignore a very large part of the Social Security deficits problem: Medicare. If Medicare is included, Social Security outlays as a percentage of G.N.P. would rise from about 6.5 percent in 1982 to 11 percent after 2020, under Mr. Kuttner's assumptions.

A second problem is with Mr. Kuttner's "fairly pessimistic" assumptions—the intermediate assumptions of the Social Security Administration. These assume nonstop growth in real wages of 1.5 percent per year (the experience of the last fifteen years has averaged out to a slight annual decline) and a steady 5 percent unemployment rate after 1995. The scenario assumes the fertility rate will increase to 2.1 children per woman, from the current rate of 1.8, when it is just as likely that it will remain unchanged or even decline, given the increased numbers of women who are choosing working careers. Finally, the assumptions for growth in life expectancy at age 65 are just a fraction of what we have experienced over the past forty years, despite the fact that medical research continues to come up with new breakthroughs year after year.

Over the past ten years, the so-called intermediate assumptions of the Social Security Administration have in every case proved to be too optimistic, often by a wide margin. I think that the current intermediate assumptions are no exception. For planning purposes is it not prudent to use less optimistic economic and demographic assumptions? The Social Security Administration's alternative III, or pessimistic, assumptions have real wages growing by 1 percent annually and an unemployment rate of 6.0 percent after 1995—no easy feat given our economic performance of the last decade. The fertility rate is assumed to decline slightly, to 1.7 children per woman, and life expectancy at age 65 is projected to increase by a little over one year per decade. Using these assumptions, the outlook for Social Security changes dramatically. Excluding Medicare, Social Security would consume 8.0 to 8.5 percent of G.N.P. after 2020. With Medicare included, Social Security outlays would represent 18 to 20 percent of G.N.P. after 2020.

Prudent planning requires that we take a comprehensive look at the problem. Action should be based on an assessment of what realistically can happen, not just what we would like to happen. Though I clearly disagree with Mr. Kuttner's prognosis, I do find most of his suggested cures reasonable. I simply believe that the urgency and size of the problem require doing more sooner.

PETER G. PETERSON
Lehman Brothers Kuhn Loeb
New York, New York

To the editors:

Bob Kuttner's spirited defense of the status quo in retirement policy is remarkably Republican in its form of argument. He says that "precisely because [Social Security] redistributes . . . broad benefits to the middle class," the system is also able to redistribute "so much income to the poor." This is a curious sort of "trickle-down" liberalism. In effect, Kuttner is arguing that welfare for the well-to-do is desirable, if only because eventually some measure of subsidy finds its way to the poor. I detect the unmistakable form of a Trojan horse.

As currently structured, the Social Security system does not redistribute "so much" income to the poor, but rather transfers massive amounts of wealth from the young to the old, without reference to need. Only 9 percent of the funds expended by the system actually find their way to poor people. Meanwhile, over a third of the people receiving Social Security benefits have incomes over $30,000. Money squandered on the unneedy old comes at the expense of those who do indeed deserve our subsidy and support—the poor of all generations.

Under the current system, more than a quarter of all single women over 65 are forced to subsist on less than $4,000 a year. That's a national scandal that can only be corrected once millionaires, such as Representative Claude Pepper, are denied their windfall profits in Social Security. We have already reached a point where a quarter of the population (the working poor) pay more in payroll taxes than they do income taxes, just so this middle-class welfare program called Social Security can cover its periodic "cash flow crises." The real issue for pragmatic liberals is not whether the current inequities of the system can be preserved after a little tinkering; it is why, in a liberal democracy, the wealthy should receive welfare, simply by virtue of having reached a certain age.

PHILLIP LONGMAN
Princeton, New Jersey

To the editors:

If you ignore Bob Kuttner's testy remarks about the supposed enemies of Social Security, you find that his recommendations are almost identical to those that appear in the typical "Social Security Crash" article. Bringing federal employees into the system, holding down the cost-of-living increase, even making the benefits taxable (which is the easiest way to concentrate the money on people who need it) are all part of Kuttner's plan.

In fact, there are only two big differences between Kuttner's suggestions and those of the liberals and neolibs whose faithlessness he laments. He says nothing about raising the retirement age, perhaps because he feels we must be true to the stipulations of the system's founders. In that case, why not return to the age of 65, where it started? (Most people now take early retirement at 62.) Or he might be thinking that the age should reflect the same balance between working years and retirement as in the original plan. If so, it should be raised at least to 68, to reflect today's longer life spans.

The other disagreement is that Kuttner thinks the lid on cost-of-living adjustments should apply to *all* Social Security payments, not simply to those above a certain amount (say, the first $500 per month). That will not make much difference to the fifth of all elderly people with total incomes above $30,000—but what will it mean for the half of all single elderly women who live on less than $5,000 per year, Social Security included? A robust defense of "liberal" principles that overlooks the difference between rich and poor is a strange defense indeed.

JAMES FALLOWS
Austin, Texas

(continued on page 39)

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TRB®

FROM WASHINGTON

Yesterday And Today

It was the most extraordinary transition in American politics. It occurred just fifty years ago, as F.D.R. succeeded Herbert Hoover. Millions were unemployed and nobody knew why. Doubts and new philosophies sprang up like weeds. I was there; I saw it.

I got into my battered Model A in the morning and drove downtown. I parked all day near the White House. Things were different then: first-class stamps cost three cents. Department stores sold two-trouser men's suits at $20 and advertised women's muskrat coats for $55. You could buy a new De Soto Six for $695. A nickel almond bar cost a nickel.

Poor Hoover. I can see him now, sitting at a press conference as Secretary of Commerce (the ablest man in the Coolidge Administration) looking down at the table, and when we had finished our questions, looking up, and answering every one. What a President he is going to make! I thought. And he entered the White House telling the world to marvel: we had actually reached a point where we could "abolish poverty." Then the Crash came and he was beguiled into accepting the Smoot-Hawley tariff cure. I knew it was wrong. I dandled my son to the tune, "For Utah's Reed Smoot/We do not give a hoot!"

Over the protest of 1,028 leading economists, he signed the lethal bill on June 12, 1930. Within two years, twenty-five countries had established retaliatory tariffs and the industrial world was feudalized. The economy got worse.

F.D.R. swept in just half a century ago with a three-hour Inaugural parade that sang "Happy Days Are Here Again" in a city where hotels, stores, and restaurants posted signs saying, "No checks on out-of-town banks accepted due to the unsettled banking conditions of the country." As a matter of fact, five-sixths of the states were under bank holidays or banking restrictions even before F.D.R. shut all the banks. In his Inaugural address, besides saying that we had "nothing to fear but fear itself," he warned that he would ask for emergency powers, if necessary, "as great as the power that would be given to me if we were in fact invaded by a foreign foe."

What is the relevance of yesterday for today? For one thing, we are in the worst recession since 1933 and most modern comparisons go back to that as a starting point. It is nowhere near so bad today, of course: unemployment is now 10.8 percent, whereas it went as high as a third of all workers during the Depression. But latest government figures show that U.S. factories are operating at only 69.8 percent of capacity, the lowest point since they began to collect these figures thirty-four years ago. Our President agrees with Hoover that the less government the better. This is standard conservative wisdom. The trouble is that the only counterweight the little man has to big business in industrialized society is big government. The public criticizes government but turns to it anyway. I suspect Reagan won't have much more success than Hoover did in reducing government's size.

There is a striking similarity between the problems of Roosevelt and Reagan in one respect: each operated at a period of profound social change. Roosevelt had to catch up with social trends that had been accepted in Europe for twenty years. As far back as Bismarck, the German government assumed social responsibilities for the people that were abhorrent to Hoover. In his last speech of the 1932 campaign, Hoover expressed his laissez-faire approach eloquently: "You cannot extend the mastery of government over the daily life of a people without somewhere making it master of people's souls and thought." Ronald Reagan must have heard that speech.

Most of what Roosevelt did was inevitable, and he did it with flair, the Happy Warrior in a wheelchair. His supreme test came, perhaps, when he reopened the nation's banks after closing them for reorganization. Would people snatch and run? No. They thought of Roosevelt's tilted cigarette, and his laugh; it gave them confidence. "A year ago," Walter Lippmann wrote later, "men were living from hour to hour, in the midst of a crisis of enormous proportions, and all they could think about was how they could survive it. Today they are debating the problems of long-term reconstruction." In short, F.D.R. reopened the banks and nothing happened. It was the greatest nothing-happened story of a lifetime.

Fifty years ago America exported relatively little; today we export a lot. As Senator Mathias points out in current hearings on the world economy, U.S. exports, as a share of our G.N.P., have doubled in the last decade. Henry Kissinger anxiously makes the same point in the January 24 issue of *Newsweek*. It's gotten so these foreign dealings probably affect your bank on Main Street. About a fifth of our industrial product is now exported. One in eight factory jobs produces for export. About 40 percent of farm production goes abroad. This means we can't be prosperous if we don't sell.

Change the image on the screen to the big oil crisis in the mid-1970s: there was a tenfold increase in prices. Then the boom ended. It wasn't like the Crash of 1929, but it was a worldwide shake-up. Kissinger thinks "developing countries" have borrowed something around $500 billion. A demand that they now repay would produce a crisis. Interest payments already account for as much as 45 percent of their foreign exchange earnings. In some cases, Kissinger says, "Creditors and debtors are thus bound together in a system in which disaster for one side spells ruin for the other. . . . A blow-up is certain sooner or later if debtor countries are asked to accept prolonged austerity simply to protect the balance sheets of foreign banks."

Surely they won't repudiate. Who knows? International bankers aren't popular. Elements in low-income countries would rather tell Uncle Sam to go to hell than go hungry to keep up payments to Wall Street. The Senate Foreign Relations subcommittee is examining rescue operations proposed by the International Monetary Fund. The I.M.F.'s financial kitty is low; it recently committed $3.9 billion for loans to Mexico, and is considering $1.8 billion for Argentina and $5.9 billion for Brazil. It wants a $6 billion quota increase from the U.S.

So what will the U.S. do? There are precedents either way: there's the Marshall Plan generosity . . . and there's old Reed Smoot. I don't know what will happen. But we've only seen the beginning.

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THE NEW REPUBLIC
FEBRUARY 7, 1983

THE ROSTOW AFFAIR

Surtout, pas de zèle. Above all, no zeal: this was Talleyrand's advice to diplomats. Eugene V. Rostow, who lacks Talleyrand's gift for getting on, cited it sadly in his farewell remarks to the staff of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, for which he was just rudely relieved of responsibility. Mr. Rostow's firing revealed a crisis of management in the most critical matter of our time; it revealed, too, an American reluctance for progress at Geneva that may fairly be called a scandal. The Rostow affair showed once again this Administration's approach to arms control: above all, no zeal.

Mr. Rostow was probably not sacked because of his ideas about arms control; his successor, Kenneth Adelman, has the same ideas. They are both avowed arms racers. He was sacked because he instructed officials too much in ideology, and because he intruded himself into the making of policy on the Middle East. (That might not have been held against him if his intrusions had been on the Saudi side.) A problem of "process," in other words —or so it seemed until *The New York Times* the morning after. Bernard Gwertzman suddenly had details of a story that Leslie Gelb wrote last month, to the effect that Mr. Rostow was stripped of his authority for arms control because he had been controlling arms too avidly. Mr. Rostow has surprised people like us by acting according to his job description, and so has Paul Nitze. It appears that last July Mr. Nitze, our negotiator at the talks on limiting intermediate-range missiles in Europe, presented his Soviet counterpart, Yuli Kvitsinsky, with a stunning suggestion. Mr. Nitze let it be known that the United States was open to a compromise. We would go off the "zero option" and talk about numbers. What happened next is unclear. According to some sources, an "informal agreement" was worked out, in which the Soviet Union would reduce the number of its SS-20s and the United States would install fewer Pershing and cruise missiles. According to other sources, there was nothing like a deal, only an unofficial change in the American position for the purpose of stirring the still Swiss waters and testing the Soviets' flexibility. All the sources agree that, whatever took place between Mr. Nitze and Mr. Kvitsinsky, Mr. Rostow concurred. He too agreed about the futility of the "zero option," and during a trip to Europe last summer he sanctioned Mr. Nitze's explorations. Swiftly the White House scolded its hawks for acting like doves. Mr. Nitze, however, kept his job. Mr. Rostow lost his.

These are more than bureaucratic battles. At issue is the substance of the Reagan Administration's thinking about nuclear weapons. In 1981 the President proposed that all sides remove all theater nuclear missiles from Europe. The United States would deploy no Pershings and no cruise if the Soviet Union would dismantle all of their counterparts. This went beyond arms control to real disarmament. It was a moral success—and a political failure. The Russians would not "go to zero," and the agitation in Europe against the new arrivals from America was mounting. This was the context in which Mr. Rostow and Mr. Nitze decided that some agreement was better than none, and deviated from their instructions. The White House's response to their deviation has removed the scales from our eyes. It casts a sinister light on the "zero option" itself. The President's noble nostrum looks now like a strategy for silencing criticism while the Pentagon presses on. The "zero option" was attractive to our planners not least because it would fail. All or nothing was an excuse for all. Nobody was suggesting, however, that we not deploy any intermediate-range missiles. Mr. Rostow and Mr. Nitze were willing to compromise on nothing more than the size of our deployments; the compromise they broached with the Russians conforms to all the canons of arms control —the canons of parity, of stability, of deterrence. Fewer instruments of death on both sides was what they had in mind. Officials in Washington now protest that the arithmetic of the "informal agreement" was bad for America. (Mr. Nitze is said to have proposed that 50 of their SS-20s be matched by 150 of our cruise, and that we pass on the Pershings.) But the arithmetic could have been haggled over later. It was the principle of the

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agreement that meant progress, and it is the principle that has been sacrificed. "A mythology may be created in Europe about all this," said a senior State Department official, "that somehow Rostow and Nitze negotiated a breakthrough that Neanderthals in Washington blocked." He took the words right out of our mouth.

In fact it is not true that nobody was suggesting that we deploy no intermediate-range missiles. Yuri Andropov was. On December 21 he put forward a proposal to counter what "as if in mockery, is called 'the zero option.'" The Soviet Union would reduce its SS-20s to a number equal to the number of missiles maintained in the French and British arsenals—about 160—if the United States agreed not to station any Pershings in Europe. When these "clear and fair terms" were summarily rejected in the West, Mr. Andropov sweetened the suggestion and added that some of the SS-20s may not merely be moved from their positions, to which they could easily be moved back, but also taken apart. And Mr. Andropov tossed his best tease yet at Hans Jochen Vogel, the German Social Democrat who is running for chancellor. He said that he was prepared to negotiate according to numbers of warheads, not numbers of missiles. As the West has been trying to talk warheads for years, this was music to certain Western ears, and almost at once there appeared the hope that the Party chairman had long-range nuclear warheads in mind, too. Inventing Russians is a familiar expression of Western ingenuity.

IT WAS, ALL OF IT, music to Western ears—program music, to be precise. Mr. Andropov spurned the breakthrough in Geneva before Mr. Reagan did. And his proposals have no merit, since they fly in the face of the hardware. We appreciate that the Soviets must count the French and British missiles in their calculations. The problem is that these missiles are dramatically inferior to the SS-20s. They do not match the Soviet missiles for speed, accuracy, and power. The consequence of the arrangement proposed by Mr. Andropov is a Soviet advantage in Europe. We say: the West zero, the East zero. They say: the West zero, the East plus. What they say must be understood, then, not as arms control but as the manipulation of opinion. The Soviet suggestions comprise a major propaganda campaign to make it politically impossible for the Western European governments, for the German government in particular, to accept the American arms. The arms are to arrive in December, the German elections are to be held in March, and the streets are filling with protesters for peace. There is soil, in short, for Soviet seeds. Some shoots are beginning to show. The parliamentary spokesman on foreign and security issues for the Social Democrats in Germany told a reporter quite without shame that "I'm in favor of a Soviet plus, West zero agreement."

Americans are historically uninstructed in the use of information as a political instrument. Propaganda is not an accepted tool of politics here. (It is an accepted tool of economics, where it appears as advertising.) We prefer to go straight to the substance of ideas, and recoil from the point of view that looks only at their political intentions. Obviously, the substance of Soviet ideas must be seriously considered, but so too must their intentions. The Andropov proposals lack substance. They are also a scheme. We must not be fooled. But we must be as little fooled by zero-zero as we are by zero-plus. The political intentions of our government's official position on intermediate-range nuclear weapons have been exposed. Arms control is not exactly among them. The appointment of Mr. Adelman, for example, is just another torture. He is an expert on Africa; and what he has written on the nuclear question is a real cause for alarm. In 1979 he published in *Policy Review*, the journal of The Heritage Foundation, an essay called, with no elegance, "Rafshooning the Armageddon: The Selling of SALT." The essay heaped sarcasm and scorn upon the arms control efforts of the Nixon, Ford, and Carter Administrations. It mocked Henry Kissinger for thinking that superiority in strategic nuclear weapons may be meaningless. It compared the public's horror of nuclear war to the public's horror of *Jaws* and *The Towering Inferno*. Then, two years later, the director-designate of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency wrote with enthusiasm about "newer and better offensive nuclear weapons." Clearly the man does not grasp very much about the moral or military dimensions of the strategic situation. There may be some comfort in the likelihood that the Secretary of State will keep his new colleague on a short leash; but, according to Michael Gertler of *The Washington Post*, "even very senior officials say they do not know Shultz's views on the subject, or even if he has any."

The result of the Rostow affair is that a good American idea is out in the open. What was attempted last summer was the Reagan Administration's finest hour of arms control. An hour is about all it was allowed to last. Perhaps the political reality in Europe in the coming months will teach the Administration that you can fire a man, but you can't fire an idea.

NOTEBOOK

□ KENNETH CRAWFORD, who died last week at the age of 80, was quite a reporter, and quite a fighter. As the second president of the American Newspaper Guild, he fought against Communists and fellow travelers inside the union. As a war correspondent for *Newsweek*, he fought, in the way of a reporter, against the Axis—he was the first journalist to hit the Normandy beach on D-Day. As a *Newsweek* columnist, he stubbornly defended the war in Vietnam long after the country had

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turned against it. And as the writer of THE NEW REPUBLIC's TRB column, he fought economic royalists, isolationists, Republican reactionaries—and his own editors. After one such disagreement in 1943, he gave up the TRB chair, passing it along to his friend Richard L. Strout, who holds it to this day. He was a dashing, handsome man ("he was beauty brave in action," a fellow correspondent, Ernest Hemingway, once wrote of him), but he was more than that. Ken Crawford wasn't right all of the time, only most of the time: but he never tailored his views to suit anyone but himself. Compared to that, merely being right is easy.

□ THE GREEN PARTY in West Germany, which may make it into Parliament in the next election, has settled upon its strategy. It will dwell, of course, on disarmament, particularly upon its opposition to the deployment of the new missiles. But it will dramatize disarmament in a way that nobody will forget—nobody, that is, who remembers the previous period in German history. Petra Kelly told the Party's convention that she would produce a "war crimes tribunal" at which the United States and the Soviet Union would be arraigned. Since it might be difficult to set up such a tribunal after a nuclear war, maybe it makes sense to hold it now. Still, something more than antinuclear politics is going on. The tribunal will be located in—of course, it had to be—Nuremberg. And witnesses will include not only survivors of Hiroshima, but survivors of Auschwitz as well. Of course Auschwitz has little to do with first-strike weapons, but it may have a lot to do with the German interest in them. Hitler's victims will be returning to Nuremberg to point the finger at the United States, which went to Nuremberg to point the finger at Germany. It appears that the peace movement in Germany must be placed in the context of recent German history for it to be completely understood. The Pershing and the cruise may be an opportunity for Germany to unburden itself, to put mass murder on somebody else's conscience.

□ TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO IN THE NEW REPUBLIC: "The car purchaser, says Harlow Curtice, head of General Motors, wants cars that are 'lower, wider, longer and heavier,' with faster engines. Disagree? Well, who paid *you* a bonus of $575,000? Yet the funny thing is people aren't buying the new passenger cars. They have plenty of money, Harlow Curtice told the Senate Antitrust Committee last week, but they are 'somewhat cautious in buying.' But cheap little no-gadget cars from Europe are scooting all over the place. Harlow Curtice sizes up the average American: he wants his car as long as a yacht with the outside like a juke box and the inside like a boudoir. Would lower prices sell more cars? Good gracious, *No!* said Harlow Curtice—what the country needs is an 'across-the-board tax cut' to put consumers in a buying mood." (TRB, February 10, 1958.)

The Senator from Elizabeth Taylor.

THE WARNER TOUCH

NOTHING SUCCEEDS like finesse. It has certainly been the key for John Warner. His ability to attract salutary partners has been crucial to his thriving condition. His career in public service has been helped enormously, if not secured, by two women—both wives. When the going gets tough, the tough get married.

There is a story, told by Washington and Lee graduates of a certain age, about Warner as a student. When the directory of freshmen women came out, dear John cross-referenced the names in the directory with those in the Social Register. There were some sparkling entries, but the pick of the glitter was Catherine Mellon. She would become his first wife. Charlie McDowell, a school chum of Warner's, says, "I have heard that story told in his presence and it seems not to displease him."

In *Witness to Power*, John Ehrlichman says flat out what previously had been whispered: "Mr. Warner was to be given posts in the Nixon Administration—Secretary of the Navy and Bicentennial Chairman—at the insistence of the Mellons and their relatives the Scaifes, who were contributors of millions of dollars to the Nixon campaigns." He became known, for a time, as John Warnermellon. And when Catherine and John Warner divorced, he says, they remained on "friendly" terms. This is perhaps an understatement. She settled a reported seven-and-a-half million dollars on him, not counting Georgetown house and Virginia farm.

Warner's second wife, Elizabeth Taylor, is generally credited with saving his bacon in the 1978 Virginia Senatorial election. With determination and grit, she played monkey to his organ-grinder. He had something to say. She attracted the crowds.

If John Warner is not exactly a feminist, he deeply understands the value of a woman's touch. A diplomat tells the story of Warner's first date with Barbara Walters (after Mellon, before Taylor). On this occasion he said something along the lines of: "You are such a terrific woman, you could make me a Senator." The diplomat continues, "Actually this was two dates—the first and the last." Warner was not about to forsake the idea, however. It can be surmised that he tried out the same line on Ms. Taylor, with more positive results.

If one agrees that a helpmate is a necessity in politics, it might follow that a tough campaign calls for a spectacular spouse. John Warner had both. A man named Richard Obenshain had, in fact, defeated him in the primary for the right to run as the Republican Senatorial candidate. When Obenshain was killed in a plane crash before the general election, Warner was named to fill the spot. He got the nod, a political writer remarked privately, "by talking conservative and, it is rumored, by picking up the campaign debt." Now was the time, if

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ever there was one, to see how much attention could be garnered by Elizabeth Taylor, candidate's wife.

The violet-eyed lady stood by her man . . . and sat, and ate chicken, and shook hands, and gave little talks. What had proved a losing proposition at the time of the primary began to seem viable. Obenshain's death meant that Warner now had a chance to pull victory out of a hat. Elizabeth Taylor gave him the hat.

Their romance was a very jazzy one by Capitol Hill standards. Hell, by *anyone's* standards. Once safely situated in the Senate, however, Warner wanted to tone down the Hollywood image that had proved so useful on the hustings. "Elizabeth's number-one role," he announced, "is that of wife and homemaker." Meanwhile, the wife and homemaker was confiding to friends that life was just so boring she didn't know what to do. What she did do was sign on to appear in *The Little Foxes*. Except for a limited engagement at the Kennedy Center, which made Mrs. Taylor Warner perhaps the first Senate wife in modern times to have trod the boards in front of her husband's colleagues, *The Little Foxes* conveniently took her out of Washington.

It was suggested that Warner was too eager to speak publicly of marital bliss with Elizabeth Taylor. One had difficulty imagining any other Senator cooing to reporters that his marriage was "good, like red wine, and improves with age." Alas, like some red wine, the marriage turned. After five years, La Liz was calling her husband, in the presence of others, "Senator Asshole." The Warners separated. A friend of hers explains the breakup in wonderfully broad strokes: "He devoted more and more time to Senatorial duties and to squash —and she fit into neither."

Included among the photographs in the reception room of Warner's Senate office, where I went to interview him, is a picture of John and Elizabeth at his farm in the midst of a huge rally. In his inner office there is a large (perhaps twice life-size) color photograph of Taylor's face, taken about the time she worked with Montgomery Clift—the first time. What a sentimental man, I thought. Here he was, separated (the divorce had not yet come through), and the pictures remained.

Before I got to Washington, an aide to Warner had asked that I please not bring up the decamped wife. This may have been so the Senator could bring her up, which he did. It has been remarked that his references to her are almost a conversational tic. They begin with "Elizabeth, my wife," perhaps to distinguish her from the Queen. He spoke warmly of her for raising his consciousness, among other things. It was she, he explains, who had a "broadening influence" on his views about equal pay and equal recognition for women.

Charlie McDowell, the friend from college, remembers that Warner was a "self-confident guy from Washington, more sophisticated than most of us and very social. His father was a physician." Warner adored his father. "He was a scholar in Greek and Latin," the Senator reminisced. "He also went to Washington and Lee. He was involved in the care of people, particularly the early study and surgery of female cancer."

Warner likes to say he "ran away" to enlist in the Navy in 1944 at the age of 17. He didn't really "run away," since his father knew where he was going. But it was that teenage gesture that convinced John Warner he was a "military man." He served in three wars as a member of both the Navy and the Marine Corps.

When he graduated from the University of Virginia Law School, he interviewed with Judge E. Barrett Prettyman for a clerkship. In preparation, Warner says, he memorized all of Prettyman's opinions. He got the job. Warner went on to the U.S. Attorney's office in Washington, criminal division. He and his cohorts, regular Joes all, called it Homicide. From there he moved to a prestigious law firm (Hogan & Hartson), taken in, he says, by a partner who had seen him argue for the government—and against the partner. (His version is much nicer than the other one, which is that Hogan & Hartson handled his wife's affairs.)

He found being Secretary of the Navy a thrill. "Being head of the U.S. Navy is without parallel," he told me. "John Connally feels that way, too." Even today, Warner is gung-ho Navy. "It has everything all the others have," he said. "Even part of the space program. War is a terrible thing, of course. I went several times to Vietnam. It was literally like it was in M*A*S*H, without the humor. But life was so full in those days. . . . "

IF SOME PEOPLE regarded our Bicentennial celebration as a year-long birthday party for rah-rah jingoes with propagandist inclinations, Warner thought it was swell—"a serious job, for the history involved." He loved being the chairman. He especially loved the Tall Ships and the Freedom Train, "both of which," he winces, "were teetering on the verge of financial disaster." And the Bicentennial suited Warner because of personal considerations. "My children suffered from their father's public involvement with the war in Vietnam, so the Bicentennial was a counterpart [sic]." He visited each state and the territories to make appearances and give speeches. His detractors say he's never recovered from the importance of it all. It was with this accrued background of being one of the dutiful people that Warner decided to become a Senator.

Warner acknowledges that he's having fun in the Senate, and that everyone in his family is off doing his or her own thing. "My kids are off pursuing their careers" (school, mostly) "and Elizabeth is off pursuing hers." As if maybe everything's fine and the marriage isn't over. But if there's a hint of unreality to his approach, there is also the suggestion of gallantry. He does, after all, owe her something—possibly his seat.

Warner's interests as a Senator revolve around his view of himself as a military man. He is on the Armed Services Committee and chairman of the Strategic and Theater Nuclear Forces Committee. He also sits on the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, which he

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says has more to do with things military than most people understand. His membership on the Joint Committee on Printing may be chalked up to being a good citizen of the Senate.

The colleagues of Warner's with whom I spoke seem to feel that he has good instincts, but no particular knowledge. Says one who tried to educate Warner on a specific subject (at Warner's request), "He has the attributes of being a first-rate politician, but he is not intellectually demanding. He is just . . . pale."

Edward Luttwak, on the other hand, a military strategist of some standing, believes Warner to be more than a surface Senator. Luttwak says he "has made a serious effort to keep in touch with naval developments and has chosen to use some of his time to attend small seminars attended by experts. I have never heard him say anything earthshaking—but that is not required. Very few Senators will use their time to learn something."

Warner has also learned about old-money understatement. He likes to call himself a farmer, for example. This may be true, but the farm is two thousand acres, and it has been pointed out that he is the only "farmer" in Virginia with a swimming pool in his barn.

Other people often call him pompous and pretentious. A Washington personage who's been at Warner's farm, Atoka, says his den makes the Oval Office look naked. "There is the Navy flag, the Marine flag, the Navy chair, and both the United States and Bicentennial flags." I didn't notice any pomposity, although I feel certain I wasn't supposed to. The only odd moment during the time I spent interviewing Warner was more funny than pretentious, and that was during one of his mad dashes from meeting to meeting in that cavernous old Senate office building. Catching his breath at the top of one flight of stairs, he pointed out the peach-colored wall. "Thank God for the *pêche*," he drawled. "Otherwise I'd never know what floor I was on." The *pêche*?

There may, in fact, be something courtly and genteel about Warner that is misread. He is capable of unvarnished sentiment. He believes, for example, that "not everyone wants or needs a four-year college education. Some of us are at our best working in the fields or forest under God's great sky. . . . Some of us find life's greatest satisfactions in working with our hands—working with tools and instruments—building, repairing, shaping, and assembling." Thanks to the Senator's votes in favor of cutting college loans, more young people will be able to enjoy this kind of satisfaction in years to come.

As for the kind of legislator Warner is, he appears to be hardworking and earnest, if perhaps dimly lit. He is certainly *there*. He is more there, in fact, than most Senators, taking pride in his 100 percent record of voting attendance. The pride, he thinks, comes from his Sunday school days when he got a gold star for perfect attendance. "It was the first recognition I ever got," he says. "That and school boy patrol."

An opinion poll taken halfway through Warner's term showed him to be the most popular politician of either party in Virginia. This suggests that the finesse works on the electorate, as well as the ladies. Speaking of which, the question arises: who's next? There is talk of an oil heiress and a hunt country matron. I am rooting for former Queen Hope of Sikkim, myself. Anyone else would be anticlimactic.

MARGO HOWARD

Margo Howard is the author of the *Eppie: The Story of Ann Landers* (Putnam).

Gold Diggers of 1983.

THE BOOKIE STATE

A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO, in one of those gestures of support that are far more damaging than open attack, President Reagan's friend Charles Z. Wick explained that the ostentatious glitter of the Reagan White House was serving a higher purpose. In times of economic distress, Wick confided, people enjoy the spectacle of distant elegance, just as they liked watching Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire movies during the Depression. As was widely remarked at the time, it was an unedifying analogy. But since then, in keeping with the New Federalism, many state governments have found their own way of combating hard times with a chorus of "We're in the Money."

The biggest news story in New Jersey in December was the almost hysterical response to the state's "Pick-6" lottery jackpot of $11.2 million. "Let's face it, there's not much good news around these days," remarked Lottery Executive Director Hazel Gluck. "People are putting down their $1 bets to buy a dream."

Nor is New Jersey the only state selling dreams these days. Sixteen states and the District of Columbia now have lotteries, and business is brisk. For fiscal year 1981, ticket sales in Pennsylvania were up more than 30 percent, to over $500 million. New York's lottery is having its best year ever, and Washington State's is well beyond expectations. In calendar 1982, according to projections by the Public Gaming Research Institute, a gambling think tank and consulting firm, Americans bet $3.8 billion with their friendly local states.

It's not just economic conditions that have spurred the lotteries. The states have become better bookmakers: "passive" games, in which bettors are given their number, have been replaced by more popular pick-it games, which resemble the traditional (and illegal) numbers racket. Perhaps equally important, the states have grown more comfortable in their new role. While early lottery advertising rather diffidently stressed the use of

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the receipts—New York offered "Your Chance of a Lifetime . . . to Help Education"—the states now emphasize avarice, urging their citizens to bet with all the gusto of a carnival barker. Drawings are conducted live on television, and commercials feature mini-dramas of instant wealth. New York City's Off Track Betting Corporation proclaims on TV, "O.T.B. players are the winningest people in town."

Few states have made a more wholehearted commitment to gambling as a source of funds than New Jersey, which is leading the pack in the emergence of the Bookie State. Between the lottery, the casinos of Atlantic City, and the state-operated racetrack in the Meadowlands, New Jersey takes in $430 million a year from gambling, nearly 7 percent of its total revenue. Moreover, while other forms of revenue are hurt by the recession, gambling receipts have thus far proved recession-proof.

In 1969, when the New Jersey lottery was approved by referendum, there was little expectation of the variety of games, pervasive urgings to bet, and constant news coverage of jackpots and winners that mark daily life in the state today. "It's simply a natural evolution of the product and the marketplace," explains P.G.R.I. Director Duane Burke. "New Jersey has a tradition of being in the forefront of state lottery development." The Lottery has arguably become the most imaginatively conducted branch of the state government.

Additional innovation (and revenue) is likely. The Lottery wants to install video slot machines in taverns and liquor stores, with a plan of ultimately placing five thousand, for a projected annual revenue of $96 million. Opposition has come from two groups: state legislators who claim that slot machines in bars would appeal to people when their judgment might not be at its sharpest, and casino owners who object that the state would be infringing on their franchise. The casinos themselves are seeking twenty-four-hour gambling. (Currently they are closed from 4 a.m. to 10 a.m.) There is also talk of year-round racing and off-track betting. (New York City now wants to expand its off-track betting to cover other sporting events, which would presumably let the city set the point spread for Giant and Jet games.) Asked recently, by a reporter for the Newark *Star-Ledger*, where the state would draw the line, Ms. Gluck answered, "Good question," and suggested that a blue-ribbon panel be appointed to consider it.

For governments, sponsoring gambling is a kind of fiscal avoidance behavior: money brought in by this "voluntary tax," as proponents call it, is money that need not be raised by politically painful involuntary taxation. But even for governments there is no free lunch. Lotteries do not bring in as much as broad-based taxes, and the states' winnings have served largely to replace some of the recession-reduced revenue from those taxes. Yet the electorate responds to any proposal to increase taxes, or to find other revenue sources, by asking suspiciously what's happening to all the lottery money they keep hearing about. "There have been complaints from people that when they voted for the lottery, they felt their education taxes wouldn't go up," conceded New York State Lottery director John Quinn recently. "If they believed that, they were unrealistic."

But New York and the other lottery states spend a lot of money urging their citizens to be unrealistic, to bet in games offering them one chance in two million of winning. The drive-time radio commercials rarely talk about the odds, and they need not talk about the winners; television is fascinated by them, and covers the lottery winners to a degree that creates the impression that lots of people are winning millions of dollars all the time. New Jersey spent $1.5 million advertising its lottery last year, but its best advertising was free.

BOTH KINDS of advertising, it seems, have been effective. Studies have suggested that the increase in ticket sales comes not from people betting more, but from more people betting. Gambling may be inevitable, but states are recruiting brand-new bettors, largely from the younger, blue-collar component of the middle class. If this is not quite what Professor Ross Wilhelm of the University of Michigan calls "the corruption of the middle class," it is still rather unsavory.

New Jersey has always had a piquant reputation (its Pine Barrens have been described as the Arlington National Cemetery of the mob), so there is perhaps nothing surprising about its identity as a place where the Lottery is the largest growth industry and the casino buses are more dependable than public transit. But the disquieting atmosphere of bread and circuses that marks the present lottery states is hardly likely to stay confined where it is. Many more states are expected to begin making this sort of devil's bargain soon, as state financial pains continue to spread out from the Northeast. The Arizona Lottery started in 1981, the Washington State Lottery in November 1982, and the Colorado drawings began in January. Facing huge deficits, such states as Oregon and California are considering the idea. In five years, residents of most if not all of the U.S. will be asked by their governments to pick a number, any number.

Unquestionably, state governments are in desperate need of money. And not all of their traditional sources of revenue have been unfailingly wholesome: states take a large cut from the sale of liquor and cigarettes. But in neither case is the state seeking to increase its take by actively urging greater consumption, and in neither case has it put itself into the business of selling dreams. Implicit in any government's explanation of why it takes money from its citizens is the idea that taxes are the price paid for civilization. The force of that argument, and the public atmosphere, are somehow eroded by the addendum, You Could Win Big.

DAVID SARASOHN

David Sarasohn is managing editor of *New Jersey Monthly*.

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Mondale has stolen a march.

FRITZ ON FIRE

BY MORTON KONDRACKE

Sacramento, California

THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY solemnly resolved, after its 1980 debacle, to shorten the Presidential nominating process, and to give the 1984 Democratic National Convention a real chance to deliberate about who the candidate should be. After all, the 1980 race had begun way back in November 1979, nine months before the national convention, with a straw poll at the Florida state convention. The 1984 campaign was launched here, at a similar state convention, on the weekend of January 14—*eighteen* months before the national convention. So much for good intentions.

On March 18, 1980, Jimmy Carter effectively defeated Edward Kennedy by trouncing him in the Illinois primary. There was much more suspense and combat, but by August all that was left to do at the Democratic Convention was to fight and bleed over the party rule binding Carter's delegates to him. The party afterward adopted rules strengthening the role of party professionals, but it is still possible that the nomination may be locked up by the end of March 1984. Under current state laws, twelve states and Puerto Rico will pick their delegates in February or March, accounting for 1,147 convention votes, or 29 percent of the total. Senator Alan Cranston of California is trying to get his home state to pick its 345 delegates in March, too, and Senator John Glenn wants Ohio to choose its 175 delegates then. If they succeed, more than 40 percent of the delegates will have been selected nearly six months before the convention begins.

"Front-loading the delegate selection process could have one of two effects," said Mark A. Siegel, former executive director of the Democratic National Committee and one of the party's shrewdest strategists. "It could help the front-runner lock up the nomination early. Or, if no one wins big in the beginning and one candidate picks up 200 delegates and another one gets 300, we could end up with a brokered convention after all." Siegel and many other Democratic pros think that the former outcome is the more likely, with front-runner Walter Mondale quickly wrapping up the nomination. This could happen all the faster if Senator Edward Kennedy and his supporters endorse Mondale, and if the former Vice President wins the backing this October of the AFL-CIO executive council. Mondale already has the support of Paul Tully, who handled key state races for Kennedy in 1980 and was to do the same this time. It would be even more important if Mondale picked up Siegel and Jack English, who have been top figures in Kennedy's national campaign.

It is far too early to say that the rest of the Democratic field is playing "Stop Mondale," but the other candidates are definitely trying to catch him. At the moment, Mondale is far ahead of Glenn, his closest rival, in Democratic preference polls. His closest rival in fundraising—at least the second after Mondale to raise $100,000 nationally and qualify for federal matching—is Cranston. The second-best organized at the moment seems to be Senator Gary Hart of Colorado, who has hired talented former Carter operatives for both Iowa and New Hampshire. Once Mondale was the second-best orator in the Democratic field, behind Kennedy, but now that Kennedy has dropped out, Mondale is ahead in crowd-pleasing ability as well.

Speechmaking, organizational talent, and popularity all were up for testing at the Sacramento convention, and some of the seven candidates and potential candidates who showed up also used the trip for fundraising. This was the first of several so-called "cattle shows" likely to take place this year, where each contender gets a chance to show off his skills. The man with the most to lose in California was Cranston, who could not afford to show significant weakness in any category in his home state. An October poll by the Mervyn Field organization showed Cranston as the favorite of only 14 percent of California Democrats, and when the candidate's organization heard that a straw poll might be held at Sacramento, it launched a $30,000 drive to ensure that Cranston was not embarrassed.

Cranston fielded slates of delegates in 67 of the state's 80 assembly districts. He sent every state convention delegate two letters, and won endorsements from many of the state's top Democrats, including Assembly Speaker Willie Brown, Senate President David Roberti, former Governor Jerry Brown, and Representative Phil Burton. Paid staff members and volunteers phoned delegates, and Cranston toured the state for a week, holding 25 meetings attended by about 1,000 of the convention's 1,780 delegates. Cranston was the only candidate whose staff used walkie-talkies to communicate with one another on the convention floor, and he spent five full

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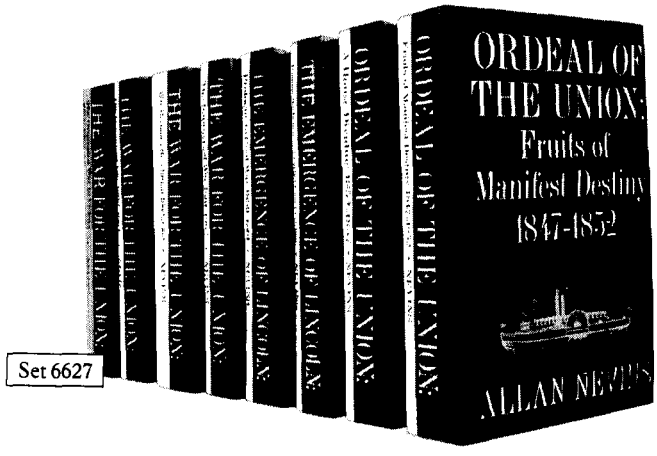

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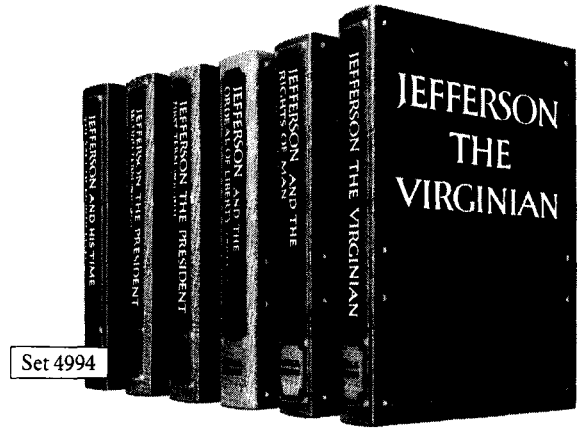

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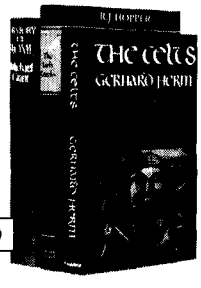

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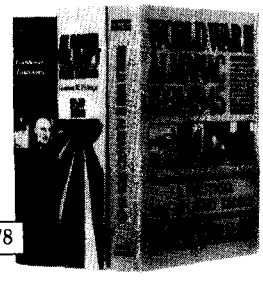

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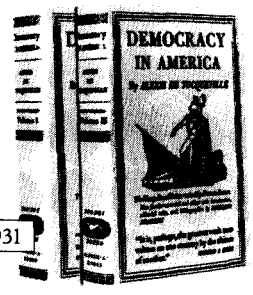

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hours before a videotape camera practicing his speech.

Cranston was not embarrassed. His speech excoriated Ronald Reagan who, he said, has "given America a government of the rich, by the rich and for the rich," and has "turned American government into a plutocracy of plunder, power, and privilege." That line was cheered loudly, as was Cranston's promise that the Democratic Party's voice would forever speak up for its constituencies—blacks, Hispanics, Asians, small businessmen, workers, farmers, gays, the handicapped, "and everyone held back by discrimination, ignorance, or bigotry." Each group in turn was cheered, and Cranston got a standing ovation for his demand—endorsed by all the other candidates, too—that the Equal Rights Amendment be added to the Constitution.

Cranston's basic strategy is to make himself the party's foremost "peace" candidate—to ride antinuclear and antidefense sentiment to victory as Senator George McGovern rode anti-Vietnam sentiment in 1972. Cranston accused Reagan of being incapable of negotiating an arms agreement with the Soviets, and said that no American government has yet made "the sort of creative, constructive, fair, determined, all-out effort we must make" to end the arms race. "I want to undertake that mission," he said. "If I am elected President on November 6, 1984, I will immediately cable Yuri Andropov on November 7, inviting him to meet with me immediately after Inauguration Day to negotiate a verifiable nuclear arms freeze." Cranston said he would then move to "substantial reductions" of arms on both sides. "Our ultimate aim must be to banish these doomsday weapons."

On the strength of his speech—the second best of the convention—his organizational effort, and his favorite-son popularity, Cranston soundly beat all comers in both the convention's official straw poll (taken after all the candidates had spoken) and a *Los Angeles Times* poll of delegates taken ahead of time. In the newspaper poll, Cranston got 40 percent to Mondale's 15. Hart got 5 percent, Glenn 4 percent, Representative Morris Udall 2 percent, and Senators Dale Bumpers and Ernest Hollings 1 percent each. The official post-speeches straw vote showed Cranston the first choice of 59 percent of the delegates to 23 percent for Mondale and 5 percent each for Hart and Glenn.

COMING:

France's Atari Socialism.

Mondale, Hart, and Glenn all mounted significant organizational efforts in California. Mondale brought seven staff members out with him from Washington, Glenn brought six, and Hart three. Glenn budgeted $20,000 for the trip, which included two get-acquainted meetings with important California fundraisers. Glenn also hired a trailer and retained the services of a corporate P.R. man, Joe Cerrell, who printed up signs and campaign buttons. Hart sent a letter to every delegate emphasizing his campaign's dedication to finding "new policies and creating a positive agenda to rally the nation." Mondale sent a telegram to each delegate and hired a phone bank to call, chat, and give a "soft" pitch for his support. All three rented a hall to entertain delegates, and Hart arranged another meeting to hold a seminar on energy, economics, and defense issues.

HART'S GOALS, worked out in a strategy paper prepared in late November, were to demonstrate that he is a serious candidate who takes California seriously, that he is the most substance-oriented of the contenders, and that he can organize well. Though it was not among his formal objectives, Hart scored well (perhaps best of all) in his press conference at Sacramento, delivering a cogent analysis of the spectacle of America's suffering another failed Presidency—and this one only two years into its term. Hart also delivered the best quip of the convention. Asked, "How do you combat the notion that you are too cerebral to be a candidate?" Hart shot back: "Well, we've already tried it the other way."

It was another objective of Hart's to demonstrate that he could deliver a speech well. Had he done so, he might have scored significant gains in California. But his delivery was uncertain, his rhetoric uninspiring, and his substantive proposals indistinguishable from the laundry list recited by all the other candidates. Like Cranston and Mondale, Hart declared that "within the first 100 days of the next Administration, the next Democratic President should meet with the head of the Soviet Union in Geneva" to negotiate about nuclear arms. Unfortunately, Hart followed both those speakers, and his proposal was already old news to the peace-hungry California audience.

Glenn, often ridiculed for being a painfully dull speaker, held the audience's attention with a methodical style that made him sound like the star sophomore in an elocution school. Glenn's speechwriters had concocted some snappy lines that the Californians appreciated—"Once again, Ronald Reagan will urge us to stay the course, but I say he's flunked the course. . . . True prosperity always flows up from the people—and never trickles down from the powerful. . . . If the President really believes his program is working, then let him talk to an American who isn't. . . . Guided by the light of old values, we can again reach new horizons."

But if Glenn has made progress in speechmaking, he

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has yet to establish an organization or to capitalize on his status as the poll-takers' runner-up to Mondale. Glenn has interviewed several political pros in search of a national campaign manager, but has yet to find one. His two top fundraisers reportedly are fighting with each other, and he has yet to raise the $100,000 required for federal matching. What's more, Glenn is beginning to have problems in some key Democratic constituencies, especially Jews and liberal ideologues. Michael Kramer of *New York* magazine has dug up the fact that Glenn twice has called for U.S. negotiations with the Palestinian Liberation Organization, and some Jewish lobbying groups have passed the word that Glenn is "no friend." Liberal groups point out that Glenn voted against the 1982 Dole bill to repeal safe harbor leasing and other corporate tax benefits.

Among the other candidates in Sacramento, Morris Udall and Ernest Hollings both made a sound, if unappreciated, point. As Udall put it, the Democrats "had better be ready with answers that are positive [but] tell the painful truth [that] there are no freebies. Some pain and sacrifice . . . will be required" to solve America's economic problems. Hollings also said that Democrats need to re-establish their fiscal credibility and both labor and management need to adjust their pay to match their productivity. Bumpers, who said he has just sixty days to decide whether to get into the race, impressed some California party officials and attracted positive notices from *The New York Times*'s political expert, Adam Clymer.

BUT THE HANDS-DOWN overall winner in California was Mondale. Even though Cranston won the straw poll, Democratic officials hastened to advise reporters that the vote doesn't mean that Cranston would win a California primary. "A lot of people are indebted to Alan and fond of him," one Representative said. "But they don't see him lasting as a candidate. They are doing him a favor, and he is also a convenient resting place for people who don't want to make another choice." While Cranston has support from some major party officials, Mondale has picked up the chief fundraisers of Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley's gubernatorial campaign. And while Glenn was holding "get-acquainted" sessions with California money-men, Mondale was raising $150,000 at two benefits in Los Angeles and San Francisco. Whereas Hart and Glenn have yet to hire national campaign managers, Mondale has a full-fledged national staff in place, headed by longtime aide James Johnson and lately joined by Robert Beckel, a former State Department Congressional liaison man who will run day-to-day campaign operations, and two speechwriters from his White House days, Martin Kaplan and Frederick Martin.

One of Mondale's California supporters, Los Angeles lawyer (and former Jerry Brown campaign manager) Mickey Kantor, said that "a change has come over Fritz. He not only knows he's qualified to be President, as he always has. Now he thinks he can win." It seems true. With Kennedy out of the race, Mondale seems liberated from the threat of months of life-and-death political struggle. Or, as one former Kennedy aide put it, "with Kennedy out, Hubert Humphrey lives." Even though the candidate was hoarse, and even though half of his speech material was not new, Mondale brought the house down in Sacramento and solidified his standing as Democratic front-runner.

THE BEST new Mondale lines were those describing "what I'd do—right now—if I were President." He said he would "chop those deficits down by scaling the defense budget to reality . . . slam a lid on hospital costs . . . repeal or delay tax indexing, and reduce the scheduled tax cut for the wealthy. I'd insist on an accord with the Federal Reserve Board to permit some long-term growth. I'd call an international economic summit conference and urge all present to establish policies of growth to provide some relief for the vulnerable economies of the world. I'd press our nation to compete again. I'd toughen our trade policies. I'd build our schools and honor our teachers. I'd cancel Clinch River and take the $5 billion we'd save and invest in research. I'd fire James Watt and Anne Gorsuch and call Mo Udall and give him his choice of their jobs."

Each line, of course, was met with a building crescendo of applause, and it continued: "I'd call for Martin Luther King's birthday to be a national holiday. Right now, today, I'd stop ridiculing the civil service. Right now, today, I'd send SALT II to the Senate and demand its ratification. I'd announce I wouldn't tamper with the ABM treaty. And I'd get on that hotline to Moscow—and I know where it is. I'd say, 'Dear Mr. Andropov, let's sit down this afternoon in Geneva and do some work.' " Mondale said, "Sure, the Russians are cynical and oppressive," but in Geneva, "I would speak up for immigration and human rights, and I would say to Mr. Andropov, 'In the name of humanity, can't we negotiate a verifiable nuclear freeze on nuclear weapons?' "

Can Mondale be stopped? Theoretically, of course he can. Cranston, for example, is trying to block an AFL-CIO endorsement, which takes a two-thirds vote of the federation's executive council. Hart is trying to score a surprise upset in Iowa, the first official campaign event of 1984, and puncture Mondale's balloon. Cranston, who has enlisted strong antinuclear support in New Hampshire, hopes to render Mondale still less credible in the second contest, and Glenn, Hollings, former Florida Governor Reubin Askew, and perhaps Bumpers are aiming to beat Mondale in various places in the South. But as his opponents think about clever guerrilla strategies, Mondale remains an army on the march. His was always a powerful army, rich in talent, manpower, and material resources. Since Edward Kennedy's departure, it's become a spirited army as well. If Kennedy were to lend his support, it's hard to see how it could be stopped.

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How a short, burly thug became a tall, dapper Chubby Checker fan.

THE ANDROPOV FILE

BY EDWARD JAY EPSTEIN

WHEN Yuri Vladimirovich Andropov was merely head of the K.G.B., his image was that of the stereotypic hard-line "police boss." His major accomplishment, according to C. L. Sulzberger, writing in *The New York Times* in 1974, was "a fairly successful campaign to throttle the recent wave of liberal dissidence." Nor was he viewed as much of an admirer of foreign culture. In 1980 Harrison E. Salisbury wrote in the *Times* that Andropov "has been working for three years on schemes to minimize the mingling of foreigners and natives. . . . Now Andropov's hands have been freed to embark on all kinds of repressive measures designed to enhance the 'purity' of Soviet society." Completing this picture of a tough, xenophobic, wave-throttling cop, Andropov was physically described, in another *Times* story, as a "shock-haired, burly man."

Andropov's accession to power last November was accompanied by a corresponding ennoblement of his image. Suddenly he became, in *The Wall Street Journal*, "silver-haired and dapper." His stature, previously reported in *The Washington Post* as an unimpressive "five feet, eight inches," was abruptly elevated to "tall and urbane." The *Times* noted that Andropov "stood conspicuously taller than most" Soviet leaders and that "his spectacles, intense gaze and donnish demeanor gave him the air of a scholar." *U.S. News & World Report*, on the other hand, reported that "he has notoriously bad eyesight and wears thick spectacles."

His linguistic abilities also came in for scrutiny. Harrison Salisbury wrote, "The first thing to know about Mr. Andropov is that he speaks and reads English." Another *Times* story took note of his "fluent English." *Newsweek* reported that even though he had never met a "senior" American official, "he spoke English and relaxed with American novels." Confirmation of his command of English appeared in *Time*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, and *The Washington Post*. *The Economist* credited him with "a working knowledge of German," and *U.S. News & World Report* added Hungarian to the growing list. And this quadralingual prodigy was skilled in the use of language, too: *Time* described him as reportedly "a witty conversationalist," and "a bibliophile" and "connoisseur of modern art" to boot. *The Washington Post* passed along a rumor that he was partly Jewish. (Andropov was rapidly becoming That Cosmopolitan Man.)

Soon there were reports that Andropov was a man of extraordinary accomplishment, with some interests and proclivities that are unusual in a former head of the K.G.B. According to an article in *The Washington Post*, Andropov "is fond of cynical political jokes with an anti-regime twist. . . . collects abstract art, likes jazz and Gypsy music," and "has a record of stepping out of his high party official's cocoon to contact dissidents." Also, he swims, "plays tennis," and wears clothes that are "sharply tailored in a West European style." Besides the Viennese waltz and the Hungarian czarda, he "dances the tango gracefully." (At a press conference within hours of Andropov's accession, President Reagan, asked about the prospects for agreement with him, used the unfortunate metaphor, "It takes two to tango.") *The Wall Street Journal* added that Andropov "likes Glenn Miller records, good scotch whisky, Oriental rugs, and American books." To the list of his musical favorites, *Time* added "Chubby Checker, Frank Sinatra, Peggy Lee, and Bob Eberly," and, asserting that he had once worked as a Volga boatman, said that he enjoyed singing "hearty renditions of Russian songs" at after-theater parties. *The Christian Science Monitor* suggested that he has "tried his hand at writing verse—in Russian, as it happens, and of a comic variety."

The press was less successful in ferreting out more mundane details of his life. Where, for example, was he born? *The Washington Post* initially reported that he was "a native of Karelia," a Soviet province on the Finnish border. *The New York Times* gave his birthplace as the "southern Ukraine," which is hundreds of miles to the south. And *Time* said he had been born in "the village of Nagutskoye in the northern Caucasus." His birthplace was thus narrowed down to an area stretching from Finland to Iran. There was also some vagueness with respect to his education. *The Wall Street Journal* reported that he had "graduated" from an unnamed "technical college," but *U.S. News & World Report* had him "drop out" of Petrozavodsk University, while *Newsweek* awarded him a diploma from the Rybinsk Water Transportation Technicum, a vocational school

Edward Jay Epstein is the author of *The Rise and Fall of Diamonds: The Shattering of a Brilliant Illusion* (Simon and Schuster), and is currently completing a book on international deception.

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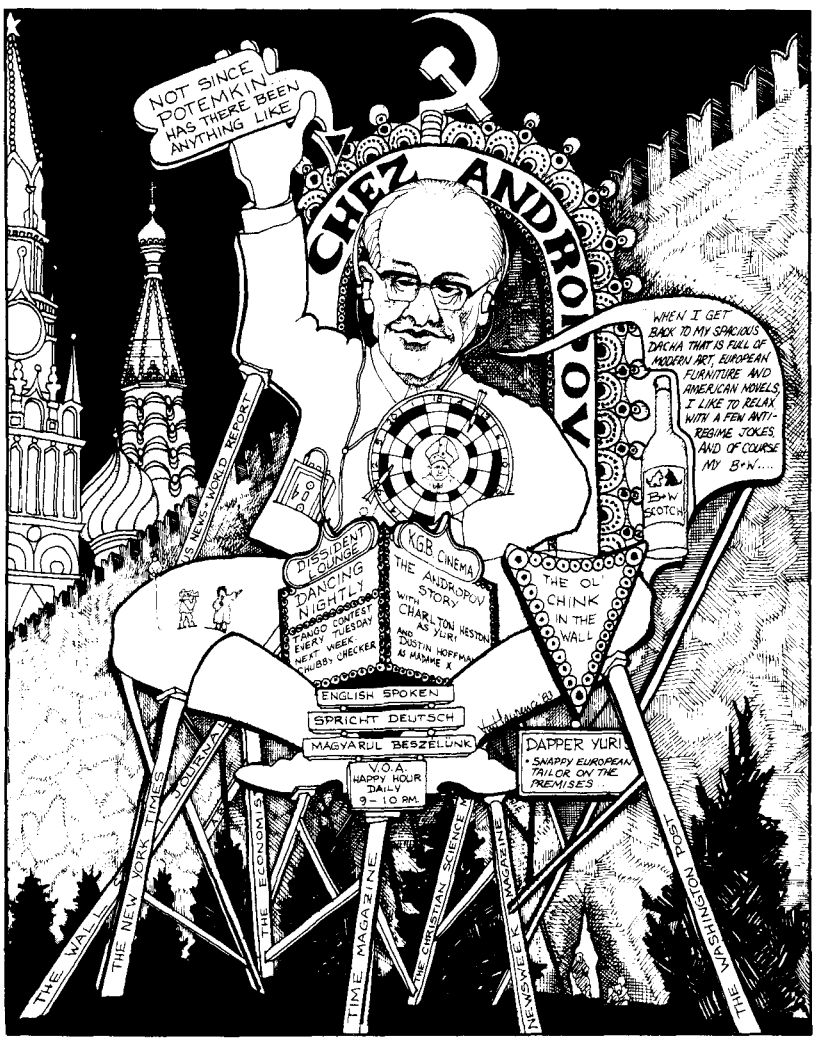
that teaches river navigation. Where had he learned music, art, poetry, Hungarian, German—and English? Harrison Salisbury suggested that he picked up English as a "young man," but *The Christian Science Monitor* contended that he learned it from a tutor, whom he saw three times a week when he was well into his 40s. The balance of his biography consists almost entirely of official announcements of awards, promotions, and trips as part of official Soviet delegations. *Time* reported him to be a widower. There is no mention, however, of whom or when he married, or whether his wife had shared his interest in jazz, American novels, scotch, telling anti-regime jokes, dancing Viennese waltzes, and visiting liberal dissidents.


NOT SINCE POTEMKIN HAS THERE BEEN ANYTHING LIKE
CHEZ ANDROPOV
WHEN I GET BACK TO MY SPACIOUS DACHA THAT IS FULL OF MODERN ART, EUROPEAN FURNITURE AND AMERICAN NOVELS, I LIKE TO RELAX WITH A FEW ANTI-REGIME JOKES, AND OF COURSE MY B•W...
B•W SCOTCH
DISSIDENT LOUNGE
DANCING NIGHTLY
TANGO CONTEST EVERY TUESDAY NEXT WEEK — CHUBBY CHECKER
KGB CINEMA
THE ANDROPOV STORY
WITH CHARLTON HESTON AS YURI AND DUSTIN HOFFMAN AS MAHMME X
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DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

The press does, however, furnish a vivid description of his home life at 26 Kutuzov Prospekt—where, according to Hedrick Smith's book, *The Russians*, Brezhnev himself resided. The scene there seems to have been quite lively, a combination of salon and recital hall. According to *The Washington Post*, Yuri Andropov is "a perfect host." On some occasions, he would invite "leading dissidents to his home for well-lubricated discussions that sometimes extended to the wee hours of the morning," after which he would send his guests home in his own chauffeured car. Alternatively, according to Harrison Salisbury in the *Times*, he invites foreign visitors to his country home. Salisbury writes, "A casual visitor to his country house . . . found him listening to an English-language Voice of America broadcast. . . . It was a long-standing habit." Andropov assiduously reads American books, including, Salisbury notes with quiet pride, his own novel, *The Gates of Hell*. Andropov's library, according to an earlier *Times* story, also included *Valley of the Dolls*, by Jacqueline Susann, and *How Green Was My Valley*, by Richard Llewellyn. Moreover, according to Salisbury, Andropov regularly invited dissident musicians to his apartment for "private recitals." His record collection included the "Glenn Miller Orchestra and other American bands," and his bar, "scotch and French cognac." *Time* described his apartment, with the precision of a classified ad, as "5½ rooms," with such "outstanding features" as "a stereo system" (for jazz), a "sofa" (for dissidents), and "a cabinet of highly polished wood" (for eyes only). These items, wrote *Time*, were "gifts to Andropov from the late Yugoslav leader Josip Broz Tito." *The Wall Street Journal*, on the other hand, reported just as authoritatively that Andropov's home "was furnished with Hungarian furniture, the gift of Janos Kadar, Hungary's Moscow-backed leader, as an apparent gesture of appreciation for Mr. Andropov's role in suppressing the Hungarian Revolution."

The varied descriptions of Andropov's apartment and his Renaissance style of life come principally from a single source. His name is Vladimir Sakharov, and he is fully credited by *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, *Time*, and others for the descriptions of Andropov's taste in American jazz and novels, his preference for imported liquor and furniture, and his "strange attraction for Western culture." (Sakharov, who is usually described as a "K.G.B. defector," is not related to Andrei Sakharov, the physicist and human rights activist.) There is, however, some question about the provenance of Vladimir Sakharov as a source. For example, *The Wall Street Journal* not only identified him as a "former K.G.B. agent," but also said he had defected "this year" (1982) and stipulated that Andropov was "his former boss." One might reasonably conclude from this that Sakharov had until recently been working in the K.G.B.'s office in Moscow, and that he had defected with important

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information about Andropov. In fact, Sakharov did not defect in 1982. He defected eleven years earlier, on July 11, 1971. Sakharov was never actually in the K.G.B., though he does recount two efforts to recruit him; at the time of his defection, he was a 26-year-old diplomat in the Foreign Ministry. And in his own two lengthy accounts of his experiences, he never claimed to know Yuri Andropov.

The first such account appeared in John Barron's *KGB: The Secret Work of Soviet Secret Agents*, published by the Reader's Digest Press in 1974. Sakharov had been put in touch with Barron on February 1, 1972. Barron writes that in 1964, when Sakharov was 19 years old and a schoolmate of Andropov's son Igor, he attended a "sexual orgy" at the Andropov apartment, where he "wound up sleeping with a girl in the bed of the man who now heads the K.G.B." Barron now says that he still considers Sakharov's description of the apartment to be "credible," although Sakharov, at the time of his interviews with Barron, "appeared to have a minor drinking problem." It is from this single, seminal visit that the descriptions of Andropov's apartment appear to have sprouted and flourished in the press. Three years ago, Sakharov wrote his own autobiography, *High Treason*, published by Putnam, in which he fails to mention either the "sexual orgy" or any other visit to the Andropov apartment. But he does provide an illuminating, if eerily reminiscent, description of his own home life.

ECHOING his version of Andropov's apartment, Sakharov writes that he himself lived in a "spacious" apartment with furniture from Eastern Europe, a TV, and a piano. He writes: "We always had a high-quality record player and plenty of American popular music recordings . . . with a leaning to jazz stylists, including records by Benny Goodman, Perry Como, and Frank Sinatra." He personally amassed a collection of jazz and "swing music" that included Glenn Miller, Dave Brubeck, Erroll Garner, Charlie Parker, and Duke Ellington. When not listening to records on his stereo, he often "poured a glass of Black & White," "turned on [his] Grundig solid state," and "turned it to the Voice of America." He "religiously" listened to jazz. When he went to the homes of his teenage friends, he writes, "I always took recordings to parties—and usually I'd supply scotch or bourbon or rye as well." (If so, he may well have supplied the jazz records and scotch he later reported he saw in Andropov's home.) He also recalls carrying around with him a copy of *How Green Was My Valley*—one of the books that, years later, he told the *Times* he had seen on Andropov's shelf. (The other book he told the *Times* he saw in Andropov's home in 1964, Jacqueline Susann's *Valley of the Dolls*, was not published until 1966—an interesting anachronism.)

Sakharov recounts that while still a teenager in Moscow he was approached by a man from the C.I.A., named "George," who eventually succeeded in recruiting him as a C.I.A. agent in Yemen in 1967. In 1968 he was offered a position in the K.G.B., but he was apprehensive that this would interfere with his work for the C.I.A., and he had his father, an influential diplomatic courier, intervene. His K.G.B. application was then squelched. Later that year Sakharov went off to Egypt as a junior diplomat. It was in Cairo that he defected. More than ten years later, he re-emerged in Los Angeles as an expert on Andropov—but his expertise was based, according to his own accounts, on little more than a teenage reverie.

THE SOURCES for other Andropov details turn out to be similarly elusive. For example, the remarkable account of a fully "Westernized" Andropov sending his car to fetch dissidents to his home appeared originally in *The Washington Post*'s Sunday "Outlook" section on May 30, 1982. The author, Charles Fenyvesi, explained to me that he had heard the story secondhand from émigrés in Washington, and that he was told that the person who had been entertained by Andropov was a former Russian dissident now living in Israel. Fenyvesi, under deadline pressure, was able to reach the source in Israel only at the last minute, and the source then said that he had never met Andropov in his life and that his contact had been with another K.G.B. officer. Confronted with the problem of having his source disclaim the story, Fenyvesi let the original account stand, adding that the witness "now denies having met with Andropov."

Harrison Salisbury's account of a visit to Andropov had so many fly-on-the-wall details about his dacha life that even an editor at the *Times* presumed it was based on firsthand experience. Later, Salisbury told me that his source was a "non-Soviet foreign visitor," and declined to identify him further. (By publishing his story, though, Salisbury has probably identified his source to Andropov and the K.G.B., who presumably keep records of foreign visitors to the dacha; it is only *Times* readers who are kept in the dark.) Whoever the mystery visitor was, his description of Andropov's voracious appetite for American novels, American newsmagazines, and English-language broadcasts on the Voice of America presupposes that Andropov has some fluency in English. Salisbury asserts that "Mr. Andropov is the first Russian leader since Czar Nicholas II who is comfortable in the English tongue" (which omits Lenin, who spoke both English and German).

Yet despite such flat assertions, Andropov's grasp of English turns out to be questionable. No Western journalist has yet interviewed him. Malcolm Toon, the former U.S. Ambassador to Moscow, who has spoken with Andropov several times, did so in Russian, not English. Ambassador Toon says he strongly doubts that Andropov has any noteworthy ability to speak English. If it had been known in the diplomatic community in Moscow, he says, he would have been briefed on it.

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Zbigniew Brzezinski, President Carter's national security adviser, shares Toon's skepticism. The C.I.A.'s national intelligence officer for the Soviet Union, who had helped prepare the classified C.I.A. biography of Andropov, also denied to me that there had been "any evidence" that he had a "fluent command of English." John F. Burns, the Moscow correspondent of the *Times*, reported on November 20, "Mr. Andropov's English . . . is open to doubt . . . since he did not use it in his meetings with Vice President Bush on Monday, and even had his written documents in English read to him by an interpreter." The possibility remains, of course, that he is a closet English-speaker. But the columnist Joseph Kraft, who was in Moscow last month for *The New Yorker*, came to the conclusion, after countless interviews with Soviet officials and Western diplomats, that Andropov's comprehension of English, if it exists at all, has been ludicrously exaggerated. Specifically, Kraft was told by Giorgi Arbatov, the Soviet Union's most prestigious "Americanologist" and an associate of Andropov's, that Andropov, to his knowledge, does not speak English—though he had taken English lessons at one time. If this assessment is correct, the accounts of Andropov running an English-language salon in a home crammed with Americana are apocryphal.

IN THE hectic excitement following Andropov's succession, newspapers dredged up eyewitness accounts containing flaws and implausibilities that, under different circumstances, might have disqualified them even as journalistic evidence. For example, *The Wall Street Journal*, in a story headlined "Andropov's Ways: Those Who Met Him Call Soviet Boss Charming But Ruthless," featured the account of a British citizen of Russian origin called Nikolai Sharigan. Sharigan, who had been arrested for espionage in Moscow, claimed that he had been hauled before Andropov when the latter was "head of the K.G.B.," and that he heard Andropov remark, "I think the English Queen won't declare war on us just for Sharigan." Sharigan was then packed off to a Soviet labor camp, where he says he spent ten years before being released in 1976. According to this chronology, however, Sharigan's putative meeting with Andropov would have to have taken place in 1966 at the latest. Yet Andropov did not join the K.G.B. until May 1967, which means that if Sharigan did meet the head of the K.G.B., he did not meet Andropov.

Another witness cited in the same "Those Who Met Him" story is Boris Vinokur, a Russian émigré who publishes a Russian-language newspaper in Chicago. Vinokur is quoted as saying, "he could smile at you and still bite your arm off." Although Vinokur describes Andropov's speech as "articulate," his dress as "quite elegant," his manners as "polite," his home furnishings as "Hungarian," his sports as "tennis and swimming," and his smile as "The Andropov smile . . . faintly sinister though outwardly friendly," it turns out that he has never spoken to Andropov. Vinokur, who defected in 1976, claims only to have seen Andropov at a sanatorium for high-level officials in a forest outside Moscow. Andropov was standing in a group of men some distance from him. He didn't speak with him or even shake hands with him, he says, and the best description he can give of his height is that it is the same as Brezhnev's; i.e., very short. Yet he is also quoted—this time by *The Washington Post*—as saying that Andropov "has the highest I.Q. in the Politburo."

The remaining witnesses who surfaced were Hungarians claiming to have had peripheral encounters with Andropov at diplomatic functions more than a quarter of a century ago. For example, Sandor Kopácsi, a former Budapest police chief, recalls Andropov borrowing the Police Department's gypsy band for a party (though it is not clear why such arrangements would be made personally by the Soviet Ambassador). In a book written in 1979, Kopácsi said that he met Andropov once, at a New Year's Eve party in Budapest in 1955, where he watched Andropov dance with his wife for an hour, and the next day questioned her about her conversation with him. The historical anecdote hunt flushed out a dozen or so Hungarian émigrés willing to claim a brush with Andropov, but not a single concrete detail of his life—such as the name of his wife and/or dancing partner.

WHAT EMERGES from these attempts to piece together a version of Andropov's life is a portrait worthy of "Saturday Night Live": the head of the K.G.B. as one wild and crazy guy. After a hard day at the office repressing dissent, Brezhnev's heir spends the evening at home, telling antiregime jokes in fluent English and playing jazz for dissidents. To be sure, not all the reporting joined this stampede from reality; there were a number of fine examples of more solid and careful reporting, notably the dispatches of John F. Burns and Hedrick Smith in the *Times*. But why the stampede in the first place? Some commentators have made dark references to the Soviet disinformation apparatus. It is unnecessary, however, to plumb such murky depths for an explanation. The excesses that led to the invention of a media Andropov proceed directly from a common conceit of journalism that witnesses and "color" can be found for any great event. When it turned out that the C.I.A. and the State Department had few details about Andropov—not even the name (or fate) of his wife (or mistress)—the press took whatever it could find in the goulash of defectors and émigrés desirous of becoming Andropov experts. For the press, the humbler—and more honest—alternative is to admit that virtually nothing is known about this man called Andropov: not the names of his parents, not his ethnic background, not his education, not his war service, not his preferences in music and literature, not his linguistic abilities, not his ideas. He stands at the head of Russia, but we don't even know how tall.

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The Chromium Mechanism

The first comprehensive explanation of electrochemical activity during the plating of chromium has recently been formulated at the General Motors Research Laboratories. This understanding has aided in transforming chromium plating into a highly efficient, high-speed operation.

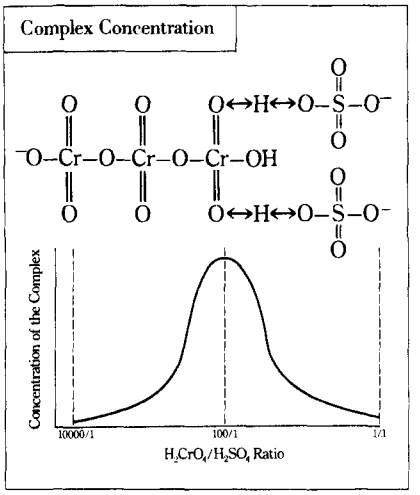
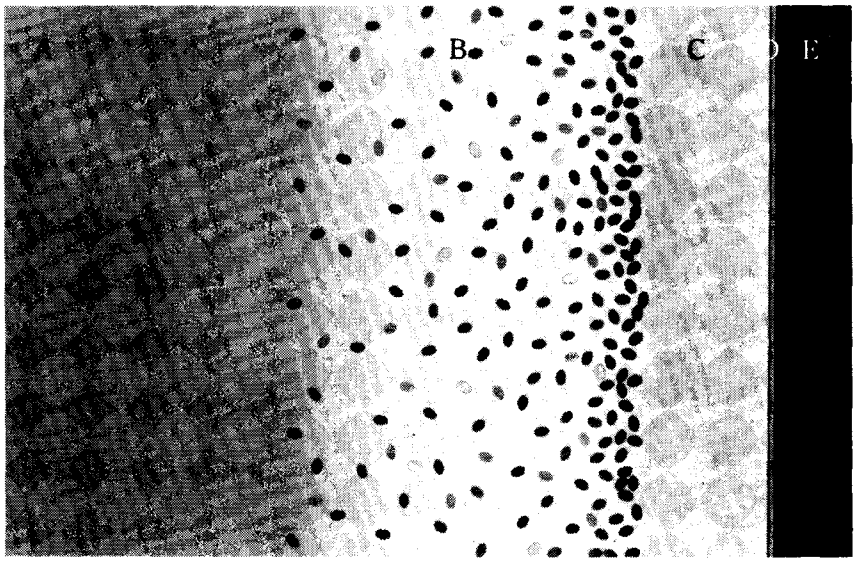


Figure 1: The electroactive complex and a theoretical plot of its concentration as a function of chromic acid to sulfuric acid ratio.

Figure 2: The electroactive complex diffuses from the bulk electrolyte solution (A) through the diffusion layer (B) to the Helmholtz double layer (C) to be discharged as metallic chromium (D) on the cathode (E) surface.



FOR MANY industrial applications, chromium coatings of more than 0.2 mil thickness are required for wear and corrosion resistance. But the conventional method of plating chromium is neither fast nor efficient. Nor, until the recent work of a GM researcher, had the steps involved in the century-old plating process been explained in detail. Through a combination of theory and experiment, Dr. James Hoare has devised the first comprehensive mechanism for chromium plating. This increased understanding has helped electrochemists at the General Motors Research Laboratories develop a system that plates chromium sixty times faster than the conventional method, while improving energy-efficiency by a factor of three.

The electrolyte for plating is a chromic acid solution which contains various chromate ions: chromate, dichromate and trichromate. From a series of steady-state polarization experiments, Dr. Hoare concluded that trichromate is the ion important in chromium deposition.

Sulfuric acid has been recognized as essential to chromium plating and has been assumed by some to be a catalyst for the process. In this strongly acidic solution, sulfate should be mostly present as the bisulfate ion $(HSO_4)^-$. Dr. Hoare found, contrary to expectations, that the addition of sulfuric acid to the plating bath decreased the conductivity of the solution.

Combining these findings with the results of previous investigations, Dr. Hoare concluded that the electroactive species was a trichromate-bisulfate complex (see Figure 1). From equilibrium considerations, he theorized that the maximum concentration of this species occurred at a 100-to-1 chromic acid/sulfuric acid ratio. The observation that the maximum rate of chromium deposition also occurred at this ratio supports the conclusion that this trichromate-bisulfate complex is the electroactive species.

During the plating process, the complex diffuses from the bulk solution toward the cathode (see Figure 2). Electron transport takes place by quantum mechanical tunneling through the potential energy barrier of the Helmholtz double layer and the unprotected chromium in the complex (Cr atom

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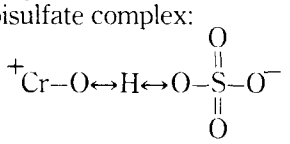
on the left in Figure 1) loses electrons by successive steps, going from Cr^{+6} to Cr^{+2}. Decomposition of the resulting chromous dichromate complex takes place by acid hydrolysis to form a chromous-oxybisulfate complex:



The positive end of this complex is adsorbed onto the cathode surface. Electrons are transferred from the cathode to the adsorbed chromium ion, forming metallic chromium and regenerating the $(HSO_4)^-$ ion. Thus, Dr. Hoare's mechanism explains how sulfuric acid, in the form of the bisulfate ion, participates in the plating process.

IT HAS long been known that chromium cannot be plated from a solution when initially present as Cr^{+3} because of the formation of the stable aquo complex, $[Cr(H_2O)_6]^{+3}$. Yet chromium can be plated when initially present as Cr^{+6} even though it must pass through the Cr^{+3} state before being deposited. Dr. Hoare's mechanism handles this paradox by explaining that the chromium ion being deposited (on the left in Figure 1) is protected by the rest of the complex as it passes through the Cr^{+3} state, so that the stable aquo complex cannot form.

The diffusion of the electroactive complex apparently controls the rate of the process, so that shortening the diffusion path increases the speed of chromium deposition. A high rate of relative motion between the electrolyte and the cathode will shorten the path. This can be accomplished by rapid flow or by agitation of the electrolyte.

Dr. Hoare found that the rate of chromium deposition increased with electrolyte flow until the process was no longer diffusion-controlled. He also found that the use of dilute electrolyte significantly increased plating efficiency.

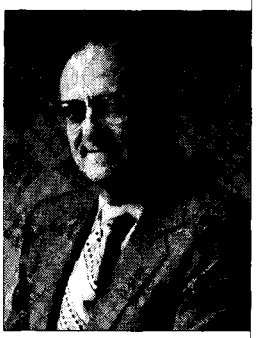
"This project is an excellent example," says Dr. Hoare, "of how basic research and engineering principles can be combined to develop a new, successful process. Now, we'd like to take on the challenge of plating successfully from Cr^{+3}, which would be an even more efficient way to provide corrosion and wear resistance."

General Motors

GM

MARK OF EXCELLENCE

THE MAN BEHIND THE WORK



Dr. James Hoare is a Research Fellow at the General Motors Research Laboratories. He is a member of the Electrochemistry Department.

Dr. Hoare served as an electronics technician in the U.S. Navy during the Second World War. In 1949, he received his Ph.D. in physical chemistry from the Catholic University of America. After an assistant professorship at Trinity College in Washington, D.C., he joined the US Naval Research Laboratory as a physical chemist. He became a staff member at General Motors in 1960.

Dr. Hoare's sustaining interest has been in electrochemical kinetics and the mechanisms of electrode processes. He is best known to the scientific community for his basic studies of hydrogen and oxygen electrode mechanisms. His book, *The Electrochemistry of Oxygen,* published in 1968, is considered a work of primary importance to the field. In addition to his work on chromium plating, he is responsible for the fundamental research that helped make electrochemical machining a precision process.

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STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

Mid-Winter Crop

The Year of Living Dangerously. Peter Weir is probably the most blabbed-about of the "new" Australian directors and is clearly one of the less accomplished. From Australia in the last few years have come such notable films as *My Brilliant Career*, *The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith*, and *Breaker Morant*, none of which was directed by Weir; from him have come the artiness and juvenility of *Picnic at Hanging Rock* and *The Last Wave* and *Gallipoli*.

The Year of Living Dangerously
(MGM/UA)

Frances
(Universal Pictures)

Muddy River
(Unifilm)

His new film, Australian-based but co-produced with a U.S. company and largely shot in the Philippines, is his best, but its improvements only underscore his shortcomings. The "year of living dangerously" is 1965 in Djakarta. The pivotal event is the attempted overthrow of President Sukarno, but this is not in fact seen. We observe this crisis and everything else in the picture through the eyes of a newly arrived Australian reporter, played by Mel Gibson (who was Mad Max in *The Road Warrior*).

The torrential qualities of life in Djakarta, the teeming streets, the engulfing poverty and famine, the waves of beggars and peddlers and prostitutes, all these are well conveyed by Weir and his cinematographer Russell Boyd. But in the *echt* tradition of old-time Hollywood, Weir, having created an authentic environment, then uses it for an inauthentic, stale story.

The screenplay, by David Williamson, who helped to commit *Gallipoli*, Weir, and C. J. Koch, is from a novel by Koch and should have stayed there. Correspondent meets woman of the the world, who is an attaché of the British Embassy. They're attracted to each other, but she wants to avoid entanglements because she's leaving Djakarta in two weeks. Nonetheless they entangle; part "forever"; then rejoin in the doorway of the plane. (One of the worst directed sequences I've seen lately.) Their affair, the barroom chat of journalists, the blather about getting stories and respecting sources are tired stuff; and are particularly gauzy with the fire of the background events blazing behind them. (We never hear that, after the suppression of the Communist revolt in 1965, hundreds of thousands of Communists were executed. Estimates vary from 300,000 to over a million.) As with *Gallipoli*, Weir has taken a horror of history and made a phony movie about it.

Year is shot in Panavision, which is handy for the mob and panoramic scenes but which handcuffs Weir in the intimate sequences. He hasn't the eye for wide-screen composition. Often he cuts from a medium close-up of a person screen left to another such close-up of a person screen right, and back again, reminding us only of the acreage between. (I thought of Cocteau's remark to a friend while watching his first wide-screen film: he asked the friend to remind him to get a larger pad the next time he wrote a poem.) In one shot a character walks off screen, the space is empty for a second, then another character walks in, to the spot the first one had vacated. And there are film schools in Australia! As for the music by Maurice Jarre, it tries at times to imitate the *Chariots of Fire* score; at other times, it doesn't.

Gibson looks the way he's supposed to look, happy or sad or angry. One curious aspect of the casting is that, of the three American actors who were imported, two play non-Americans. Michael Murphy is his usual undistinguished self as an American journalist. But Sigourney Weaver plays the Englishwoman—more attractively than she has played Americans; and the American actress Linda Hunt plays [illegible]nese-Australian TV cameraman. Yes, man: he is very short and somewhat wizened and epicene. The role is used as sage and chorus, and Hunt, overriding the fortune-cookie wisdom of the writing, gives the film its only measure of interest.

Frances. If an actor—man or woman but more certainly a woman—has unkempt hair, has circles painted under the eyes, is tied in a straitjacket, and is hauled screaming down the hall of a mental hospital by two burly guards, you can make book that his/her performance will be called marvelous. It may indeed be marvelous, of course, but it doesn't need to be: the cheers will come, anyway. So they have come, without much reason, for Jessica Lange in this film derived from the life of Frances Farmer.

Lange, who was in *Tootsie* and *The Postman Always Rings Twice*, is pretty, I suppose. I put it that way because, like Julie Harris, she just doesn't seem to have *enough* face: it looks like a pastry that has shrunk a bit. She tries hard in the part, but the best that can be said of her is that she is not bad. I was never taken, I was always watching her do her best. Sam Shepard, the premier American playwright who occasionally acts in films, fills the screen more with his mere presence—as a loyal hometown newspaper pal—than Lange does with all her strained *Sturm und Drang*.

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Seven Samurai. Kurosawa's masterwork, for the first time in the U.S. in its original 208-minute form. To be seen even if, like me, you end up preferring the previous "full" 160-minute version.

Sophie's Choice. It's not possible to see Meryl Streep's performance without seeing all the rest of the picture, too, so. . . .

Tootsie. Dustin Hoffman as an actor who impersonates an actress in order to get work—and gets more work than he foresaw. Consistently comic, often acute.

The Verdict. A drunken Boston lawyer Comes Back. Sidney Lumet made a commonplace story with uncommon skill, and Paul Newman is superb.

SK

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Kim Stanley, who was a theater figure of importance twenty or twenty-five years ago, plays Lange's mother with competence and truth. Stanley's career was hampered by illnesses; and for those who know a few of the facts, some of the lines that she speaks here about her daughter carry an extra edge.

I first saw Frances Farmer in *Golden Boy* on Broadway in 1937 when she was a golden beginner. Her life story is heartbreaking, but this script made from it is sickening. The writing is tritely hysterical; the characters are low-grade plastic; and the structure—it's as if loose script pages fell on the floor and not all of them were picked up. The director, who apparently doesn't mind being identified, is Graeme Clifford.

Muddy River. This Japanese film, the first major feature by Kohei Oguri, has a potentially good idea. The screenplay, by Takako Shigemori from a novel by Teru Miyamoto, is set in Osaka in 1956; the intent is to show the mental and spiritual condition of people eleven years after the war, as conveyed by the behavior of their children. The film centers on Nabuo, the nine-year-old son of two people who run a small working-class riverside restaurant. Nabuo becomes friends with a coeval boy and the latter's eleven-year-old sister who live on a houseboat that comes to anchor just across the river. The restaurant couple like the other two children, too, and befriend them.

The mother of the two houseboat children, we learn, is a widow and a prostitute, forced into this life to support her children after the death of her soldier-husband. The restaurant man, also an army veteran, is, despite his warm family and adequate livelihood, dispirited because of the war—just hollowed out. Often he says that those who didn't come back from the war may have been luckier. The film begins with the death of a carter, accidental, and ends with the departure of the houseboat, rupturing Nabuo's new friendships: the widow decides to move on because Nabuo has glimpsed her at her trade, accidentally. The caprice of fate, its capriciousness rather than a feeling of destiny, governs all.

But the film is split: between the background atmosphere of the adults and the story of the children. In (for example) René Clement's *Forbidden Games*, made in 1952 and set in 1940, the actions of the children underscore the events in the France around them. But in *Muddy River* the children's adventures and misadventures would be much the same if there had never been a war, if their parents' states had come about otherwise. The major portions of the film, which deal with the children, are sentimental and trite. It's up to the viewer to enforce a union between those portions and the adults' condition. This union, if enforced, produces some pathos, but the film itself ought to have helped us out more.

Oguri gets sympathetic performances from everyone, including the children, who are themselves more valid than the scenes they are given to act.

TET, FIFTEEN YEARS AFTER

Big Story: How the American Press and Television Reported and Interpreted the Crisis of Tet 1968 in Vietnam and Washington
by Peter Braestrup

(Yale University Press, 632 pp., $25, $9.95 paper)

Attempting to explain a war or a battle many years after the event has always been difficult. Almost two centuries ago, Robert Southey illustrated this problem in his famous poem on the Battle of Blenheim. Having found a skull by the riverbank, Peterkin asked his grandfather to "Tell us what 'twas all about." The grandfather tells of how "They burnt his [father's] dwelling to the ground" (they evidently had to destroy the house in order to save it), and how "With fire and sword the country round was wasted far and wide" (obviously an early "search and destroy" operation) and concluded by noting that "after the field was won . . . many thousand bodies here lay rotting in the sun" (success measured by "body count"). In horror, his granddaughter Wilhemine draws what would appear to be an obvious conclusion, "Why 'twas a very wicked thing!" she says. But he corrects her, " 'Nay, nay my little girl,' quoth he, 'it was a famous victory.' " Not content with his "explanation," Peterkin demands, "But what good came of it at last?" And all the grandfather can mumble is, "Why that I cannot tell, but 'twas a famous victory."

Fifteen years after the event, it is clear that the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong surprise attack on the cities of South Vietnam on January 29, 1968, the beginning of the Vietnamese New Year's ("Tet") holiday, was indeed "a famous victory" for North Vietnam. It was the most disastrous *strategic* military defeat ever suffered by the United States. What is not clear is why. Some have held that we were defeated because the attack came as a surprise, and within the past year there has been considerable argument concerning intelligence reporting prior to the Tet Offensive, with claims and counterclaims over whether or not we were forewarned. But acknowledging that Tet was a surprise still does not answer why it was such a crushing strategic defeat, for we have been surprised in other attacks—Pearl Harbor, the Battle of the Bulge, the Chinese intervention in Korea—and in all these cases intelligence was available that the enemy had an attack capability, but only in the Tet attack did failure to correctly read his intentions lead to strategic defeat.

The difference lies in the very nature of warfare, and a major reason why we still find the Vietnam War so hard to understand is that we have not sorted out in our minds what war is all about. We continue to argue about war in terms of military capabilities; we continue to think about war as something conducted by the military rather than by the entire nation, and even the "experts" confine their squabbles to the form rather than the substance of war—whether Vietnam was a "low intensity conflict," a "limited war," a "guerrilla war," or a "revolutionary war." To understand war in general and the significance of the Tet Offensive during the Vietnam War in particular, we need to look beneath the form of war to find and understand its substance, which is to impose our will on the enemy. If we use "will," what Clausewitz called "the moral element," as the criterion for anal-

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ysis, then surprise enemy attacks take on different meanings.

On December 7, 1941, the Imperial Japanese Navy struck at Pearl Harbor, killing some 2,280 American servicemen and sending a major part of our Pacific fleet to the bottom. Their strategic planners believed that this crushing military defeat would destroy our will, but as we well know it had precisely the opposite effect. The Nazi attack in the Ardennes in December 1944 killed more than ten thousand American soldiers and momentarily put our armies in disarray. But like Pearl Harbor, this attack only strengthened American determination, and within six months the forces of Nazi Germany were totally defeated. The unexpected intervention of Chinese military forces in the Korean War initially sent the Eighth U.S. Army reeling backward hundreds of miles and, while it weakened American resolve to liberate the entire Korean peninsula, it did not lessen our determination to prevent a Communist conquest of the South.

THE ANOMALY of the Tet Offensive of 1968 was that at the tactical level the American military acquitted itself better than it had in 1941, 1944, and 1950. During the two months of the Vietnam Tet Offensive, from January to March 1968, the United States forces held their ground and, at the cost of some 3,895 battle deaths, killed almost sixty thousand North Vietnamese and Viet Cong soldiers and broke the back of the Viet Cong guerrilla movement. Truong Nhu Tang, a former Viet Cong official and one of the founders of the National Liberation Front, recently verified that the Tet Offensive was, in effect, the death knell of the Viet Cong. Writing in *The New York Review of Books*, October 21, 1982, he says, "The truth was that Tet cost us half of our forces. Our losses were so immense that we were simply unable to replace them with new recruits."

As a matter of fact, battlefield events, if not the whole war, had not been going well for the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong for several years prior to Tet. Their attack can be seen as the culmination of a campaign plan begun in 1964 when they recognized that their initial attempts to subvert the South Vietnamese government with their southern-based guerrilla forces had failed. In late 1964 the North Vietnamese had changed the nature of the war by sending regular North Vietnamese Army forces south. Their initial plan was to split South Vietnam in two by attacking from sanctuaries in Cambodia through the central highlands. But, in our own version of strategic surprise, the United States blunted this offensive in November 1965 during the battle of the Ia Drang Valley, when the U.S. First Cavalry Division routed the 32nd, 33rd, and 66th Regiments of the North Vietnamese Army. As U.S. forces continued to build up to almost half-a-million soldiers, General Westmoreland spread them throughout the country and began to put increasing pressure on the North Vietnamese and the Viet Cong. As 1968 began, it appeared to senior U.S. military commanders that the war was reaching its decisive stage. It was, one scholar has written,

> inconceivable that the battered foe could bounce off the mat to deliver a punch capable of knocking out its opponent, incomprehensible that he should even want to try.

"But he did just that," as General Westmoreland wrote in his official report.

> Even though by mid-January we were certain that a major offensive action was planned by the enemy at Tet, we did not surmise the true nature or the scope of the countrywide attack. . . . It did not occur to us that the enemy would undertake suicidal attacks in the face of our power.

Westmoreland goes on to relate how

> The enemy's main attack was launched late on the 30th and in early morning of the 31st of January, employing about eighty-four thousand Viet Cong and North Vietnamese troops. . . . In addition to Saigon, initial assaults were mounted against thirty-six provincial capitals, five of the six autonomous cities, sixty-four of the 242 district capitals and fifty hamlets. . . . This enemy's attack in Saigon began with a sapper assault on the American Embassy, a move of dubious military value but psychologically important.

After detailing how the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong were finally turned back with enormous losses, Westmoreland concludes that

> The Tet Offensive had the effect of a 'Pearl Harbor'; the South Vietnamese government was intact and stronger; the armed forces were larger, more effective, and more confident; the people had rejected the idea of a general uprising; and enemy forces, particularly those of the Viet Cong, were much weaker.

Viewed from his perspective as the tactical field Army commander, one can understand his claim that Tet 1968 " 'twas a famous victory" for the United States.

Why did this prove not to be so? Once again Clausewitz gives us an aid to understanding. He emphasizes that "victory" is not necessarily measured in terms of successful battles (although obviously that is usually the case), but in the final analysis can only be measured in terms of the degree to which the political objective—the reasons for which the war is being fought—are met. He emphasizes that in order to defeat the enemy, one must concentrate all one's efforts against his "center of gravity," the hub of power and movement on which everything depends. While this center of gravity is usually a concrete entity such as the enemy's army, his territory, or his capital, it can also be more intangible. In terms that seem to have been written to explain Vietnam, Clausewitz wrote that "Among alliances [the center of gravity] lies in the community of interest, and in popular uprising it is the personality of the leader and public opinion." These moral centers of gravity rest almost entirely on will. Clausewitz tells us that will does not originate in the government or in the army but in the "passions" of the people. These passions are stirred up by the causes—survival of the nation, protection of vital interests, and the like—that lead the nation to go to war in the first place. The people's passions, in effect, determine the "political object" of the war, and he emphasizes that "the value of this object . . . determines the sacrifices to be made for it in *magnitude* and also in *duration*." It is important to note that the academic limited war theorists who shaped our approach to the Vietnam War had deliberately rejected this idea and had advanced the notion that the American people were no longer a part of strategic calculations.

OUR RECENT HISTORY has proved Clausewitz to be more correct than the latter-day theorists. In World War II we felt that our very survival was at stake, and we applied all our will and our energy to the defeat and destruction of our enemies. We saw Korea as part of a coordinated worldwide Communist offensive to destroy freedom and democracy and again, although to a lesser degree than in World War II, our will and our attention was focused on demonstrating that we would not permit them to spread their ideology by force of arms. Given the furor over the last ten years of our Vietnam involvement, it is difficult now to recall that for the first ten years—from 1954 to 1965—the war there was a backburner affair with little attention

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paid by the American public or, for that matter, by the military itself whose attention continued to be focused on the plains of Central Europe. Even when President Johnson decided to commit American soldiers to combat in Vietnam in 1965, he did so almost surreptitiously and took particular care not to stir up American passions. The intensity of our will was deliberately kept low, and our political motives and objectives, cloaked in high-sounding and deliberately vague generalities, were never made clear to the American people.

BECAUSE our survival was never at stake and the exact nature of those "vital American interests" we were ostensibly trying to protect were never clear, stirring up the passions of the American people in support of an Indochina involvement would have been difficult at best. Given the then American consensus for holding back Communist expansion, "containment" might have served as a basis for support. But instead of focusing our efforts on building a military barrier to North Vietnamese expansion, we wandered off into social programs such as nation-building and pacification. Some critics have held that by his Johns Hopkins speech—in April 1975, given even before American ground combat units were committed to battle—President Johnson unwittingly undercut American support for the war. Fearful of stirring up a right-wing reaction that would jeopardize his domestic programs, he deliberately avoided portraying the North Vietnamese as villains. Instead he launched into an impassioned plea for an international version of his Great Society. The announced goal was not to win victory but to "improve the life of man in that conflict-torn corner of the world" and to that end he promised "a billion dollar American investment."

As he himself relates, within a week "Hanoi's Communist Party newspaper [dismissed] the Johns Hopkins offer as 'bait.' " Not only did it fail to win over the North Vietnamese, this attempt to bribe our way out confused the issue in the minds of the American people. As a result of the Johns Hopkins speech, the North Vietnamese became morally ambiguous, making it even harder to stir up popular passions. This was a major shortcoming, for it was precisely the lack of such passion that created our strategic vulnerabilities, which the North Vietnamese were ultimately able to exploit. An enemy document captured during Tet revealed that one of their purposes was to "create conditions for pacifist movements in the USA to expand, and the doves to assail the hawks, thus forcing the USA to radically change its Vietnam policy." Commenting on this, General Westmoreland observed, "The enemy's own statement of his strategic goals is interesting." But it was more than interesting, it was crucial, for it was evidence that the North Vietnamese had correctly identified a vulnerable American center of gravity. One of the fallacies of those frustrated by the North Vietnamese success at exploiting this vulnerability was that the North Vietnamese had not only *identified* loss of American public support for the war as a strategic center of gravity but that they had also *created* it. In his *New York Review of Books* article quoted earlier, the former Viet Cong official Truong Nhu Tang furthered this fallacy with his lament that

> It is a major irony of the Vietnamese war that *our propaganda* transformed this military debacle into a brilliant victory, giving us new leverage in our diplomatic efforts, inciting the American antiwar movement to even stronger and more optimistic resistance, and disheartening the Washington planners.

As long as American will was intact, North Vietnamese propaganda, no matter how skillfully executed, could have been no more successful in striking a decisive strategic blow than Dr. Goebbel's propaganda had been in World War II. But American public support was not intact. From a high of 61 percent in favor of the war in November 1965, support had slipped to 51 percent by November 1966, and by November 1967, on the eve of the Tet Offensive, the balance had actually shifted, with 46 percent against the war and only 44 percent still in favor of our involvement.

In other words, the vulnerability already existed, a vulnerability created not by the North Vietnamese but by the American government itself which had failed—indeed, had not even seriously tried—to convince the American people of why their continued sacrifice was necessary. And if the North Vietnamese did not create this strategic vulnerability, neither did the American news media (although there are still many who be-

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lieve their guilt almost as an article of faith). At worst, their reporting poured salt into this already open wound. At best, they accurately reflected the ambiguities, uncertainties, and confusion that typified our entire Vietnam involvement.

THE BEST SOURCE on both the details and the effects of American media reporting on the Tet Offensive is Peter Braestrup's *Big Story*, subtitled "How the American Press and Television Reported and Interpreted the Crisis of Tet 1968 in Vietnam and Washington." First published in two volumes by Westview Press in 1977, it was republished in a more than six hundred-page abridged edition in 1978 and has been reissued this month by the Yale University Press. Braestrup was particularly well qualified to make this analysis. As a Marine combat veteran of the Korean War, he knew firsthand the realities of front-line combat (knowledge not widely shared by the Saigon-based American press corps). Further, with his experience as a reporter for *Time*, the New York *Herald Tribune*, and *The New York Times* as well as his assignment as chief of *The Washington Post*'s Saigon Bureau during the Tet Offensive, he knew how the news was gathered, interpreted, and managed.

His book covers the Tet Offensive in exhaustive detail, with chapters devoted to the press corps in Vietnam, both North Vietnamese and South Vietnamese performance; the performance, leadership, and morale of American troops; and concludes with an analysis of how this reporting affected American war policies. Braestrup saw media reporting of the suicidal Viet Cong attack on the embassy as "a portent of journalistic reaction" to the entire crisis. He describes how

> the embassy story . . . dominated the wire service leads, got the big headlines, and, later, was featured in network TV shows—all in accordance with standard U.S. press traditions. The "terrorist-proof embassy" was symbolic (of what, take your choice), the battle was dramatic . . . and, most important, the newsmen were around to watch the action (or part of it). All the elements of irresistible story were there—green choppers landing, paratroopers on the rooftop helipad, the shouts of MPs, the dead VC sprawled around the flower beds of the immaculate embassy front lawn. . . . What more could readers and viewers want.

But, as he points out,

> there is a vast difference between seizing an objective and dying in a bold but abortive attempt to do so. Hanoi did not claim a victory—psychological, symbolic or otherwise—at the embassy. But American newsmen were quick to regard the major 'psychological' triumph there, if only because they—the newsmen—and Lyndon B. Johnson had been taken by surprise.

Summing up overall media performance, Braestrup concludes that "rarely has contemporary crisis-journalism turned out, in retrospect, to have veered so widely from reality."

But Braestrup is careful to put this media failure in proper perspective. To the question "what impact did the post-Tet Washington uproar—so heavily shaped by the media—have on the course of the war?" he concludes, "no one knows exactly." While he scathingly details the misperceptions and distortions of American media reporting of the Tet Offensive, Braestrup at the same time destroys the myth that American media reporting was the cause of the "collapse" of public support. He dismisses the "conventional wisdom" that the Tet outcry "turned the war around" and finds "there is no evidence of a direct relationship between the dominant media themes in early 1968 and changes in American mass public opinion vis-à-vis the Vietnam war itself." As we have seen, American support for the war had been slipping long before the Tet Offensive, and, as Braestrup notes,

> For all their destruction and drama, the Tet attacks and their aftermath did not suddenly bring into light any basic new weakness or virtue in Administration Vietnam policy. What the attacks did do, specifically, was forcefully to direct attention to the war [and] to highlight the lack of a White House strategy for ending it.

Braestrup's analysis is correct, for it was not North Vietnamese propaganda or distorted American media reporting that undercut the will of the American people so much as it was their commonsense conclusion that, because we lacked clear-cut goals and objectives, American strategy for Vietnam was fatally flawed.

This perception was even further strengthened by the effect of the Tet Offensive on their Commander-in-Chief. It was at this moral center of gravity that the Tet Offensive struck a decisive blow. This was particularly telling, for to a large degree moral defenses are personified by the national leader (recall Winston Churchill's stirring stance in 1940). "In any major crisis," says Braestrup,

> the President's response helps to set the tone. . . . In contrast to . . . Franklin D. Roosevelt after Pearl Harbor [President Johnson] started by setting a hesitant tone. . . . The fact of the matter was that the President and much of his Administration had been shaken. . . . What was striking—and important—about the public White House posture in February and March 1968 was how defensive it was. In retrospect, it seemed that President Johnson was to some degree 'psychologically defeated' by the . . . onslaught on the cities of Vietnam.

While the media was quick to report this "defeat," they did not cause it.

But the media was not entirely blameless in our strategic defeat. Braestrup's biting analysis of how poorly the American media covered South Vietnamese performance on the battlefield takes on new importance as we recall that "community of interest among alliances" is another critical moral center of gravity. As he says, "The overwhelming journalistic fact about the South Vietnamese performance at Tet was that it was rarely reported first-hand." What was not (and still is not) apparent to most Americans was that "At Tet, the losses among [South Vietnamese] forces continued to exceed those of the Americans, as had been the case since the United States lost its first serviceman in Vietnam in 1961." (By comparison with 3,895 U.S. battle deaths, the South Vietnamese lost 4,954 soldiers killed during the Tet Offensive.) The effect was that the American people gained the erroneous impression that the South Vietnamese were not pulling their share of the load, and this perception severely weakened and finally destroyed the alliance between the United States and the Republic of Vietnam.

THIS EFFECT on the community of interest among alliances is especially critical, for the very structure of American national security rests upon coalition with allies around the world. In 1977, when *Big Story* was written, Braestrup warned that "It could happen again." "Unsatisfactory performance in another surprise crisis or near-crisis appears likely." Braestrup was widely attacked. Supporters of the war did not want to hear that the media was not the cause of our defeat. Opponents of the war rejected his conclusion that the Tet Offensive was misrepresented as a battlefield defeat. The journalistic profession felt betrayed that a colleague would portray their shortcomings. But ignoring the problem did not make it go away, as the

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current furor over media coverage of the recent war in Lebanon makes all too clear. As was true with Tet, the most damaging aspect of this reporting has been its effect on weakening the community of interest that is the bedrock of the American-Israeli alliance.

Reconsideration of the Tet Offensive of 1968 should make clear why it was a strategic defeat for the United States and "a famous victory" for the North Vietnamese. But little Peterkin's question, "But what good came of it at last?" continues to haunt us. Fifteen years after the Tet Offensive and seven years after the North Vietnamese "final victory," reports continue about terrible conditions in Vietnam, with their economy in collapse and repression still so prevalent that tens of thousands of their citizens still risk their lives each year to escape. The Communist regime makes no secret of these conditions. For example, the front page of the January 3, 1983, *Washington Post* carried an extract from *Tap Chi Tuan Doi Nhan Dan*, the theoretical journal of the North Vietnamese Army. According to the journal,

> The [present Vietnamese] government's 'enemies' include 468,000 members of the former South Vietnamese Army; more than 72,000 administrative personnel and police of the old Saigon government; 3,000 leaders and 450,000 members of disbanded political parties; about 400,000 Roman Catholics, who . . . make up 13.6 percent of Ho Chi Minh City's population, 60,000 Buddhist monks and 480,000 Vietnamese Chinese accounting for 14.7 percent of the city's inhabitants.

In the end, what the South Vietnamese people have been left with is only little Wilhemine's observation on the results of an earlier "famous victory"—"Why, 'twas a very wicked thing."

HARRY G. SUMMERS JR.

Colonel Harry G. Summers Jr., veteran of the Korean and Vietnam wars, now on the faculty of the Army War College, is the author of *On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War* (Presidio Press).

THE MOST AMERICAN PRESIDENT

The Years of Lyndon Johnson: The Path to Power by Robert Caro

(Knopf, 882 pp., $19.95)

Lyndon B. Johnson: A Memoir by George Reedy

(Andrews and McMeel Inc., 159 pp., $12.95)

Twenty-four hours after John Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas in 1963 it was my job to sit down and write a hasty assessment of his successor for a London newspaper. Luckily I had been working on a profile of the Vice President, so I had already formed a judgment, for what it was worth. "He is a man who invites a certain cynicism," my piece ended. "His virtues are hidden behind his slightly raffish facade. He has a subtle intelligence, and yet an utter lack of intellectuality. He will make a very American President of the United States."

The following weekend, in the bar of the Driskill Hotel in Austin, Texas, and in front of the assembled White House press corps, I was sharply taken to task for this judgment by Joseph Kraft, the columnist. For Kraft, it seemed, to see Johnson as a more representative product of American political life than Kennedy was in itself evidence of incurable prejudice against the Republic. In vain I tried to defend myself by arguing that in this instance it seemed to be the patriotic Kraft, rather than the impertinent foreigner, who despised the President of the United States. My defense was crossly brushed aside. For those who had hoped that John Kennedy would make them part of "a Golden Age of poetry and power," even the faintest trace of admiration for his successor put one beyond the pale.

Looking back on that well-remembered, ill-tempered conversation nearly twenty years ago, I think I now have a more generous understanding of why people like Joe Kraft felt as they did. I can see, too, that my own original judgment was based on little more than crude instinct. Yet I still think my instinct was right. What I sensed then, I believe, is what Robert Caro is saying in every line of this plethoric, repetitive, but in the end compelling biography. At his best—and he was not always at his best—John Kennedy adorned the Presidency. Lyndon Johnson made it the embodiment of the country's political will and instincts, contradictory as they were.

IN AT LEAST four separate, significant ways, Johnson embodied the main currents of the political history of his time. In him, for a start, the excluded South and West came to power, essentially for the first time. He was, of course, the first Southerner to become President since the Civil War. Even that was less important, perhaps, than the fact that in Sam Johnson's boy from the Texas Hill Country, the populist tradition first entered the White House. That tradition, it is now a cliché to point out, was deeply ambivalent, and Johnson contained in himself both the liberal and the conservative instincts of populism. As Caro shows in detail, though without quite seeming to understand what he is showing, Lyndon Johnson stood both for the New Deal, and for its enemies. Caro seems to think this was mere hypocrisy and opportunism, and no doubt Lyndon Johnson on the march toward power was as unscrupulous as the next man, and more unscrupulous than most. But there was more to it than that. Texas, and the United States, embraced the New Deal, and yet yearned for a time when it had not been necessary to embrace it. Johnson was able to exploit that ambivalence so skillfully because he felt it in himself.

Thirdly, therefore, Johnson embodied the great compromise that laid the foundations of the liberal consensus. It was at bottom a compromise between the foreign policy of the conservatives and the domestic policy of the liberals. Government must intervene in international affairs, as the conservatives demanded after 1945, because of the threat of Communism. Government must intervene in domestic and economic policy, as the liberals had insisted since 1933, to guarantee prosperity and to distribute its fruits. It was appropriate that in the end Johnson himself as President tried to

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carry out both wings of that consensus policy. He tried to build a Great Society at home, and he tried to destroy Communism in Southeast Asia. He failed in both objectives. But so completely did his Administration's policies reflect the prevailing assumptions of his time that, when he did fail, it was the end of an era.

Even more fundamentally, perhaps, Johnson reflected in his entire career another ambiguity that was widespread among his contemporaries, about the function and nature of the political process itself. Was it a sacred drama, expressing the moral aspirations of the nation, whose purpose was to fight what Johnson liked to call "the ancient enemies of mankind?" Or was it simply a roulette wheel to decide who were the winners and who the losers, a wheel, moreover, that could be bought or fixed? Johnson, like most of his contemporaries, seems to have thought of the political system in both ways: as cynic, and as moralist. In this, incidentally, as in so much else, he was a true heir of Franklin Roosevelt.

ROBERT CARO'S first volume is almost wholly concerned with Lyndon Johnson as a master political manipulator in the making. There is little suggestion by the time it ends, after almost 900 pages, with the 33-year-old Johnson cheated out of election as Senator in 1941, that he was motivated by anything in politics other than a megalomaniac lust for power, recognition, and success. I believe this is not the whole truth.

Caro moves at the unhurried pace of a party of pioneers heading west across the prairie in their Conestoga wagons. Sometimes he turns aside for months on end to explore a tributary or to hunt the buffalo, even to grow a small crop. His hero is not even born until page 66. (This must be a sort of biographical record.) There are voluminously researched, mildly interesting digressions: on the vegetation of the Texas Hill Country, the life of Sam Rayburn, the life of farm wives in the West before rural electrification and the like.

It must be said that the pace is slow not only because Caro explores these byways, but also because his style in detail is repetitive. It is his habit to begin a paragraph by making a number of assertions, then to produce enough evidence for them to stun any critic rash enough to dissent, then to repeat the assertions. It is as if he can never believe that he has succeeded in persuading. This is biography in the spacious Victorian tradition, with the great difference that where the Victorian three-volume biography was a monument erected by tireless piety, Caro's indefatigable energy is driven by the desire not to leave out a single example of Lyndon Johnson's political manipulations and betrayals.

HIS CENTRAL THEME, indeed, is that Johnson used everyone, and betrayed everyone. Specifically, he traces a pattern of Johnson using older men and then discarding them once they had helped him to what he wanted. This is what happened with Cecil Evans, the president of the South-West Texas Teachers College at San Marcos, who gave Johnson his first start. It happened again, Caro argues, with Sam Rayburn; certainly he shows in painstaking detail how Johnson maneuvered to stick Rayburn with the reputation in Roosevelt's mind of being a party to John Nance Garner's rebellion against the New Deal. And it happened with Roosevelt himself, in Caro's interpretation. He ends his first volume with L.B.J., after F.D.R.'s death, dissociating himself from the New Deal to win the support of conservative backers in Texas. "Before the paint had faded on the billboards proclaiming his loyalty to Franklin D, Lyndon B had turned against him."

It is a stark judgment. Caro seems to believe that the explanation is that Johnson was psychically wounded by his father's financial difficulties. The presumption is that in some way it was this scar of adolescence that drove Johnson to use, and then to humiliate, older men. (Ambitious young men, in the nature of things, *will* use a number of older men.) The broad flood of narrative seems to rise in some half-buried spring of psychohistory of this sort. But whatever the explanation, and Caro is too sophisticated, or too cautious, to be very confident about his explanation, his portrait is in monochrome. He paints Lyndon Johnson as a genius at political manipulation with few redeeming qualities. For all his work and his research, the book fails, for me at least, because Caro is simply unable to conceal his *dislike* for his subject.

Intellectual curiosity about the roots of his psychology there certainly is, and curiosity, mingled with admiration, about the way he worked his manipulative masterpieces. Caro gives fascinating accounts, for example, of the part played by two Brown & Root contracts, for the Marshall Ford Dam in central Texas, and for the Corpus Christi naval air station, in L.B.J.'s rise. But inquisitiveness, even on an obsessive scale, is not quite enough to make a satisfactory biography.

One last example may illustrate Caro's lack of human curiosity. It is his contention, founded on interviews with surviving habitués of the household, that Johnson deceived his financial backer, friend, and political mentor, the Texas newspaper publisher Charles Marsh, with Marsh's beloved mistress (and later wife), Alice Glass. I have no means of knowing whether Caro is right in this conclusion. I know that not everyone familiar with the personalities involved accepts his version of events. What gives Caro away is that never, in a long account of the supposed affair, does Caro consider for a moment that Johnson might have been moved by any emotion other than raw, manipulative ambition.

Caro quotes with apparent agreement the opinion of an "observer" of the affair. "Every time I looked at Lyndon," she told Caro, "I saw a Uriah Heep from Texas." Well, perhaps. There was certainly a consummate hypocrisy in Johnson, a remarkable capacity to dissimulate. But Dickens did not make a whole book out of Uriah Heep, who is a walk-on character in another man's story. And there was more to Lyndon Baines Johnson than the dissimulator, the manipulator, and the hypocrite.

HOW MUCH MORE is the burden of a book by George Reedy that is short where Caro's is long, dense where Caro's is loose-knit, stylish where Caro's is turgid. George Reedy worked for Lyndon Johnson in the Senate and in the White House, and in the end he left because he could simply no longer stand being bullied into doing things that he thought wrong.

Reedy is indeed a moralist, a liberal Catholic intellectual, who grew up as a newspaperman in the Middle West and worked for the United Press on Capitol Hill before going to work for Johnson. His portrait of Johnson is not flattering. On the contrary, even the most assiduous collector of L.B.J. stories will find new material here. Reedy is candid about Johnson's untruthfulness, his drinking, his sexual adventures, his appalling propensity for mercilessly bullying those who most loved and admired him. Reedy is candid about these things; and in an almost theological sense of the word he is also forgiving about them. (I have no doubt from the way he describes some

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episodes that there is another sense in which some of the things L.B.J. said and did were unforgivable.)

Reedy's judgment is very severe—*explicitly* more severe than Caro has allowed himself to be up to the end of his first volume. "His lapses from civilized behavior," Reedy writes for example, and justly, "were deliberate and usually intended to subordinate someone else to his will. He did disgusting things because he realized that other people had to pretend that they did not mind. It was his method of bending them to his designs."

Yet Reedy's Johnson is a more complex, and therefore a far more interesting man than Caro's. Reedy, after all, worked with the man for more than a dozen years at the closest quarters, was wounded by his savageries, passionately disagreed with him about many political and philosophical questions, was temperamentally poles apart from him, yet still admired both the man and his achievement. Robert Caro, in cool detachment, seems hardly to have been ruffled by the presence of his tremendous subject, hardly aware of what he *did*.

FOR JOHNSON'S achievement was titanic. Reedy unpicks the intricate mechanism of his great legislative triumphs, the McCarthy censure vote and, especially well, the pioneer civil rights vote of 1957. As Senate majority leader, Johnson certainly achieved more than any other individual in the Senate in the past fifty years. His accomplishments as President were monumental. The two years between his accession and the onset of his obsession with Vietnam represent the most creative interval in the frustrating history of the Presidency since the death of F.D.R.; the civil rights act, the voting rights act, Medicare, and the education act were measures that could not have passed if Johnson had not been a master of the techniques of political persuasion, and if he had not passionately believed in what he sought to do. At his best, George Reedy attributes to him "the politician's finest quality, a sense of the direction of political power, of the forces that are sweeping the masses."

But there was more to it than that. Johnson was certainly driven, consumed by obsessive ambition. (He is not the only politician of whom that can be said.) He also had a virtuoso's ability at every kind of political manipulation, whether in his legendary encounters one-on-one, or in his grasp of the broad strategy of a

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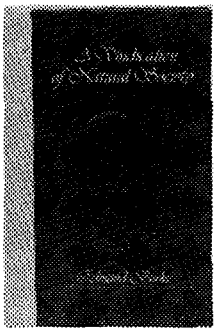

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political campaign. He had a real, if not particularly subtle, understanding of the great currents that were moving under the surface of American society. He understood instinctively, for example, more about blacks and their predicament than all the rest of the last eight Presidents put together. For he was not just a politician who floated on tides of public emotion. He did display on occasion the gifts, and the courage, of the true political leader.

He was able to do so precisely because he was so very much an American President: a man whose life had experienced to the full the contradictory impact of those two strange decades, the Depression years of the 1930s and the astonishing wish-fulfillments of the 1940s. He represented in himself, and so could effortlessly understand, the contradictions that were tormenting the country. Because of who he was, and where he came from, and also because of his extraordinary political intelligence, he could understand both the idealism of the New Deal, and the faith of the conservatives that America was about people going out and making themselves rich. Johnson saw politics both as a moral crusade, and as a piratical expedition. He *was* the New Deal, and its enemies.

Robert Caro is good at explaining how things work. He has described the political systems from which Lyndon Johnson emerged so that I, for one, feel I understand them far better than I did before. He is not, however, on the evidence of this first volume, especially good at understanding or describing the human heart. And so he tries to demean Johnson, to explain him away. Reedy can see the man in front of him in his mind's eye, and he knows better than to try to do anything like that.

"He may have been a son of a bitch," says Reedy, "but he was a colossal son of a bitch." A few judgments as sharp as that in all Robert Caro's waterless prairies, and the desert would have blossomed like a rose.

GODFREY HODGSON

Godfrey Hodgson is the author of *All Things to All Men: The False Promise of the Modern American Presidency* (Simon and Schuster).

DEPENDENCY AND DIGNITY

The Politics of Welfare: The New York City Experience by Blanche Bernstein

(Abt Books, 224 pp., $22)

"Reagan's defense policies are going to do for conservatives what domestic spending did for liberals," says Democratic Senator Gary Hart of Colorado. These policies have compelled people, in other words, to think about war and peace, and have thus enlarged the political center. The same cannot be said for Reagan's welfare policies. Instead of jarring opponents to think, the welfare and entitlement budget cuts the President stampeded Congress to pass in 1981 have polarized opinion. Two camps, each fired with ideological fervor, scream at each other across a barren divide. Legitimate policy questions are shoved aside. Welfare reform becomes a budget struggle, with both sides assuming that the amount of money spent on welfare signifies "toughness" or "compassion." Obscured by this budget war is the social horror of the welfare system.

Liberals shy away from talking about it. For political reasons, they fear granting ammunition to the other side, who are labeled enemies of the poor. For ideological reasons, many on the left are more comfortable perceiving everyone who is poor as a victim. And because the poor and welfare remain sentimental abstractions, many otherwise intelligent people are as ignorant of the true plight of the poor as they correctly accuse Ronald Reagan of being.

Silence reigns. Symptomatic of this is the relative silence that has greeted the publication of Blanche Bernstein's *The Politics of Welfare: The New York City Experience*, published last August. Currently a professor at the New School for Social Research in New York City, Bernstein was state Deputy Commissioner of Social Services from 1975 to 1978, followed by almost two years as Commissioner of New York City's Human Resources Administration. In both jobs, and before, Bernstein was frequently vilified as "antipoor" and sometimes even a "racist" because she consistently emphasized the harm welfare visited upon the poor in particular, and society in general.

PERHAPS it is a sign of progress that Bernstein's book has been ignored rather than attacked. Her basic thesis is that welfare has hurt, as well as helped, many poor people; destroyed more families than war; contributed to a sense of helplessness that weakens individual responsibility and encourages antisocial behavior, including crime, dependency, cheating, drugs. In clear if dull prose, Bernstein sketches the political culture of the last twenty years not just in New York, which offered the most generous welfare benefits, but within the Congress, the courts, and the social welfare organizations of the United States. Together, they joined to expand the porous New Deal safety net into a veritable floor of entitlements. Generally, Bernstein does not write as if she were Joan of Arc, except once. The exception is her resignation in 1979 from her city post. She briefly ascribes this to "bitter relations" between Mayor Koch and the minority community, of which she became a symbol; therefore "it seemed appropriate for me to resign." In fact, Koch forced Bernstein to resign because she was widely thought to be a weak manager.

Although she occasionally skewers callous conservatives, Bernstein aims mainly to indict liberal welfare policies. Despite a generally booming economy, reduced unemployment and enlarged government transfer programs, the number of Americans on welfare soared from 2.2 million in 1950 to 10.4 million in 1979. This growth, say most liberals, came about because government finally fulfilled its obligation to care for the poor. Thanks to government transfer programs, it is undeniably true that the percentage of Americans living in poverty has steadily declined over the past two decades (except in recessions). Bernstein both sees and agrees with this view of poverty/welfare developments. But unlike most liberals, she also recognizes another side of government poverty programs.

A study of our welfare predicament,

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she writes, led her to five conclusions that in the 1970s were at war with conventional liberal sentiment:

> (1) the number of persons on welfare who were in fact not eligible to receive it appeared to be higher than welfare officials were admitting; (2) the size of the welfare package, when one took into account cash grants for the basic allowance and rent, food stamps, school lunches, and medical assistance, was far larger than had been realized; (3) the value of the welfare package translated into its gross income equivalent, while it did not provide a luxurious level of living, was substantial enough to constitute a disincentive to work at unskilled or semiskilled jobs; (4) the availability of substantial welfare benefits had an adverse impact on family stability; and (5) the formation and continuation of the intact family (father, mother, and children) was the most important single factor in preventing dependency.

Her book provides evidence for these conclusions.

POVERTY in America is both better—and worse—than it was twenty or thirty years ago, and welfare policies deserve both credit and blame. The size of the poverty population has shrunk—from 22.4 percent of the population classified as poor in 1959 to 11.4 percent, or 24.5 million Americans, in 1978. Social Security has shaved poverty among the elderly by half. The income of two-parent black families has grown faster than the income of similar white families. And the official poverty figures are inflated because they don't count "in kind" benefits—food stamps, rent supplements—as income, and because they don't include the income earned in the underground economy. That's the good news.

The bad news is that blacks are three times as likely to be poor as whites, and Hispanics twice as likely. A major reason is the growing feminization of poverty, a social earthquake many liberals overlook. In America today, poverty is inextricably linked to family structure—one in three families headed by a female is poor, compared with only one in nineteen headed by two parents. Those who escape poverty—black or white—usually reside with both parents. The majority of poor people live in homes headed by mothers living alone, and in more cases than not, welfare becomes the household's breadwinner. The majority of black and Puerto Rican children—the figure climbs over 70 percent in parts of Washington, D.C., Chicago, New York, and other urban centers—are born out of wedlock and raised by single mothers. The liberal reflex is to blame racism. And clearly, racism has devastated many a home. But one can not overlook the fact that only 15 percent of black children were born out of wedlock in 1940, when racism had a legal shield. In 1970, the number had risen to 38 percent; by 1980, 55 percent. The percentage of broken homes among whites also has grown, but the numbers are not comparable—from 9.4 percent in 1970 to 11.9 percent in 1980.

Why did things get worse for the minority family even as racial barriers fell and government spending on the poor surged? Bernstein, like a growing body of community activists within the black and Hispanic community whose voices are too rarely heard, believes that welfare helped sabatoge families. Why? Because in half the fifty states welfare benefits are available only if the male is absent. And, she argues, because welfare lessens the males' "sense of obligation"—government will take care of my child! This argument is fraught with danger. It can overlook the people welfare has aided, the many children who receive the love and support of a strong mother. And Bernstein acknowledges there is little hard evidence on the effect of being reared in a poor, female-headed family.

But sufficient evidence is already available to draw some unpleasant conclusions about the harm welfare can cause. "One may quarrel over the question whether the availability of welfare was in part responsible for this trend," writes Bernstein.

> One cannot, however, quarrel about the degree of social pathology which is found among female-headed families on welfare. In New York City, half of the school dropouts, half of the young drug users were from families receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children. . . .

Nationally, an inspection of poverty in America leads to the discovery of two opposite trends. On the one hand, there is much more mobility out of poverty than was commonly assumed in the 1960s. For many poor Americans, a government helping hand provides the needed boost. The children in four out of five poor families will escape their parents' poverty, reported the University of Michigan's probe of 5,000 poor families, the most extensive longitudinal study of American poverty undertaken to date. For these Americans, income transfer programs have worked.

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On the other hand, there is a sizable segment of Americans—the underclass—for whom income transfer programs alone do not succeed. This group operates outside of organized society as we know it. Some are hostile to society, others afraid of it. As a group, they lack job and social skills, work habits, education, self-confidence; many are hostile, sometimes toward society, sometimes toward themselves. In this sense, their problem is behavioral. They suffer from what Dr. Kenneth Clark in the 1960s referred to as "a tangle of pathology." Antipoverty efforts that just throw money at this group of Americans are destined to fail. The street criminals, hustlers, homeless, and dependent poor who comprise the underclass require more than money. A street criminal may earn more money snatching necklaces. A government check will not provide someone who has never held a job with basic skills most of us take for granted—how to cash a check, set an alarm clock, say please and thank you, conduct an interview. A guaranteed job, as the Supported Work Demonstration Project conducted in twenty-one locations across America in the late 1970s found, did not reduce drug dependency. It is difficult for an optimistic liberal to accept that some individuals may be beyond help.

TO THEIR CREDIT, liberals choose to emphasize hope, not failure; what government can do rather than what it cannot. Yet welfare's terrible irony is that a government check robs some recipients of the self-confidence needed to go to work and succeed in organized society. Bernstein shows that dependency on welfare can become a curse. She makes clear that the majority of those on welfare are children, the old, the sick, the infirm. Most are not cheats. But a segment of those on welfare—Bernstein estimates about one-quarter, or three million—become the dependent poor. For them welfare is a way of life. This is true among the white, as well as the minority underclass. A supported work program sponsored by the AFL-CIO in West Virginia, for example, found that even though their job training program offered better pay than welfare, 25 percent of the eligible white women on welfare rejected all recruitment overtures. They preferred the security of their homes, of their daily TV soap operas, and regular welfare check, to the insecurity of the world of work.

Because checkbook liberalism has been blind to this consequence, liberals have helped fuel public rage against government. Society's obligation, they thought, was to provide money, not to question fraud or ask whether work incentives were lifted or families splintered.

Contrary to the cartoon of some liberals, most poor people I've interviewed hate welfare, find it demeaning and harmful. In the course of traveling around the country to interview poor people, I was stunned to discover that when the conversation got around to welfare, many sounded like stereotypical conservatives. For example, Denise Brown (her name has been changed) was a welfare recipient attending the Wildcat Skills Training Center in Manhattan when she expressed thoughts that would become familiar. Welfare, Denise said,

> causes people who always wanted the best for themselves to learn to settle for less . . . after a while they begin to relax into this nothingness, enjoying this crutch welfare has provided for them. This is the welfare mentality. It can make us irresponsible, lazy . . .

A fellow trainee, William Block (a pseudonym), who went on welfare after being released from prison for manslaughter, said of welfare: "you lose your dignity." William made it clear that this loss of dignity had less to do with the stigma society attaches to welfare, as liberals comfortably assume, than with feeling helpless, not in control of your own destiny.

Ramona DeLeon, an antipoverty worker in Brooklyn who raised three children on her own, said of the people she tried to serve: "You come from a welfare home and you have no sense of what the real world is. You have clothes and food and shelter. It's not good, but you still have it." For some, said Charles Bannerman, head of Mississippi's MACE, an effective grass-roots organization for rural blacks, welfare becomes a habit.

WHAT TO DO about welfare? To break the cycle of dependency, Bernstein makes a number of policy recommendations, including: tighter administration and management and crackdowns on welfare cheats; requiring work from able-bodied individuals in return for welfare; tracking down absent fathers and requiring them to provide some measure of child support. The catalogue of proposed reforms—and questions—is long. Does society, for example, have a right to tell a welfare mother it will no longer support her if she has another child? Does society have an obligation to provide day care to free more mothers from the home? Suffice it to say that many proposed reforms will run smack into the welfare Catch 22: An emphasis on reducing dependency risks hurting the genuinely needy, while improved benefits will unavoidably swell the ranks of the dependent poor. Conservatives tend to worry more about dependency, and liberals more about the needy.

WHAT IS REQUIRED is a position that synthesizes the two. To achieve this, liberals must understand that a system that enslaves a group of Americans, making them dependent on the state, is not liberalism. Because conservatives say welfare is bad is not sufficient reason for liberals to say it is good.

One truth about welfare is that it has provided a helping hand for many Americans; a competing truth is that welfare has provided a straitjacket for others. Some poor Americans suffer from racism; some from broken homes or a culture of poverty. Requiring work in return for welfare (called "workfare") may succeed with the able-bodied, but not the infirm. Preaching chastity may make out-of-wedlock births less socially acceptable, but it won't prevent a teenage girl from having a baby in order to escape an unhappy home or to have someone to love. The Reagan Administration's policies have cruelly cut the benefits and training and job opportunities of some "truly needy" Americans. On the other hand, Reagan's efforts to drive the working poor off welfare, by altering the tax laws and the income ceiling for eligibility, has been more successful than is generally conceded. According to a study by Richard P. Nathan of Princeton University, an expert on welfare who opposed Reagan's measures, most of the working poor forced off welfare have apparently found another source of income to compensate for the loss of welfare checks. "I'd like to know a hell of a lot more about what happened to these people and the effect of the cut-off of their medicaid benefits," Nathan cautions. Nationally the Reagan policy has led to a 9 percent net reduction in the size of the welfare population, proving, he says, that this group of motivated Americans don't "want to be on welfare," which should comfort liberals.

The truth about welfare (and poverty),

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as Blanche Bernstein's worthy book makes clear, is that attempts to cure the problem require a mix of liberal compassion and conservative toughness. That is the synthesis position that on other issues—disarmament, reindustrialization, capital formation—has been dubbed neoliberalism. "It is my hope," writes Bernstein, "that this book will be a marker toward that middle road."

So far, at least, the new middle has not coalesced around a discussion of poverty and welfare, as it has for other issues. To walk down that road, liberals must first climb from their bunkers. When they do, welfare might finally get reformed. For as only a conservative President could establish relations with mainland China, only the liberals can reform welfare without unleashing howls of protest that they are antipoor.

KEN AULETTA

Ken Auletta is the author of *The Underclass* (Random House).

THE LIMITS OF THE POSSIBLE

Léon Blum
by Jean Lacouture

(Holmes and Meier, 570 pp., $39.50, $24.50 paper)

This new life of Léon Blum was published in France in 1977, before the success of François Mitterrand and the left in the French elections of 1981. The English translation has therefore appeared at a moment when the experience of this new Popular Front government inevitably makes us think again of the last time such an experiment was made—by Léon Blum in 1936-1937. Once again we have seen the original hopes of radical change eroded by the pressures of economic recession and international tension.

Léon Blum is remarkable in that his reputation has survived the failure of his government in 1937; and his personality somehow seems greater than his actual achievement. Jean Lacouture, in a biography that is full of sympathetic insights, denies that Blum was, as he has sometimes been called, "an intellectual in politics" and argues that "most leaders of working-class movements or revolutionary parties were and are intellectuals." Whether this is true or not, there is of course a sense in which, as Gramsci pointed out, everyone is an intellectual insofar as he

> carries on some form of intellectual activity, participates in a particular concept of the world, has a conscious line of moral conduct and therefore contributes to sustain a conception of the world or to modify it.

And it is also true that many revolutionary leaders have been men of the highest intellectual qualities. Yet Blum was an intellectual in politics in a way that Robespierre or Lenin or Jaurès or even Rosa Luxemburg were not. He was 47 years old when he entered active political life. His reputation had been made as a critic and constitutional lawyer; he was a man more at home in the Paris of Barrès and Gide, the theaters, and the literary salons, than in the rough world of provincial working-class politics.

His entry into public life was the result of a genuine passion for social justice; but it was also the result of more personal emotions and circumstances. It was his friendship and admiration for the great Socialist leader Jean Jaurès that first drew him into the Socialist movement, and it was piety toward Jaurès's memory after the latter's assassination in July 1914 that kept him there. Yet Blum's emergence as the most important figure in the party in the vacuum left by Jaurès's death was also largely due to the intellectual clarity with which he analyzed the nature of the crisis for Socialists caused by the foundation of the Communist International and the consequent split in the party. Where Blum was exceptional among politicians was in the candor of his intellectual analysis, his willingness to expose the workings of his own mind without hypocrisy or deliberately obscuring the issues.

Jean Lacouture makes a good case for Blum as a political realist and suggests that the criticisms that have been made of his leadership of the Popular Front government are often based on a misunderstanding. The two main lines of attack have been over Blum's failure to supply arms to the Republican government in Spain at the start of the Civil War in the late summer of 1936, and his acceptance of his defeat by the Senate in May 1937. Blum was fond of quoting a remark by a Socialist leader of the previous generation, Jules Guesde, that the revolution must be made by any means "even legal ones"; but for Blum himself, the preservation of legality was a central aim in his political action. His refusal to go outside the framework of legality was a logical result of his intellectual analysis of the difference between the exercise of power within the existing constitutional framework, when the Socialist Party could only hope to attain limited gains, and the conquest of power which, however achieved, would mean revolution.

Lacouture paints a picture of Blum concerned above all to maintain unity: unity within the Socialist Party so as to avoid a repetition of the traumatic split of 1920 when the Communists and Socialists broke with each other irrevocably, and unity among Frenchmen so as to avoid the dangers of civil war at a time when it seemed to many people that there was a real possibility that the Spanish experience might be repeated in France. It was this desire to remain within the limits of the possible so as not to deepen the rifts in French society that

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explains the apparent passivity with which Blum accepted defeat. Many critics, both at the time and subsequently, have reproached Léon Blum for not relying on the revolutionary potential of the French workers and defying the Senate. It is a proof of Blum's realism that he did not do this. Although in June of 1936 the wave of strikes and factory occupations had alarmed the employers sufficiently to make them give substantial concessions to the workers, within a few months, as the economic position deteriorated, they were recovering their nerve, and the strikes in 1937 and 1938 failed where those of 1936 had succeeded. Blum's critics also accuse him of missing the opportunity to make a revolution at the moment of maximum working class protest in June 1936. This is to underestimate how precarious the apparent victory of the working class was: the organization for any prolonged revolutionary action was lacking; the divisions between the political parties and labor organizations that formed the Popular Front went deep, so that it is doubtful how long any united action could have been sustained. These limitations, of which Blum was aware, as well as his reluctance to provoke a confrontation, were the principal reason for Blum's failure, and much of the criticism of Blum seems rather unrealistic. Lacouture's account does much to redress the balance.

What saved Blum's reputation and to some extent silenced his critics was his record during World War II, when he was imprisoned first by the Vichy government and then sent to Germany. As Lacouture puts it, "Blum the prisoner was more imposing than Blum the head of government," and his account of Blum's imprisonment and trial is vivid and moving. The period after Blum's release from German imprisonment in 1945 and his return to France is the only part of Blum's life for which Jean Lacouture has been able to use some documentary material not available to earlier biographers. In particular, Lacouture publishes two letters from Pierre Laval, the Vichy premier, appealing to Blum to use his influence with de Gaulle to obtain a commutation of the death sentence imposed after a travesty of a trial. Blum's letter to de Gaulle (which was in vain) sums up one aspect of Blum's own character. "I think that we cannot carry out a sentence of death after a trial like that. There is no question of pardon but of a restoration of justice. No sympathy of any kind nor even any shared views have ever tied us together, and you know that I owe him no gratitude. But I administered justice in another time and respect it and would like it to be respected." This sense of justice—not just its spirit but also its forms—is one of the keys to an understanding of the strength of Blum's personality but also of some of his political failures. He recognized this himself: "If we were to fail," he declared after a year in office, when that failure was already close at hand, "one would be forced to wonder . . . whether . . . it is really not possible within a legal framework . . . to provide the popular masses of this country the just and progressive reforms they expect." One of the most widely read of Blum's later critics, Colette Audry, depicted him as a Hamlet-like man whose constant self-centered examination of his own motives prevented effective action. Lacouture's Blum is a more robust figure. Where he goes wrong it is as much because of his realism as because of his idealism. Occasionally, however, Lacouture criticizes Blum for his awareness of the limitations within which he was operating. He is severe about the foreign policy of the Popular Front, not so much in relation to Spain but rather because of what Lacouture calls Blum's "veritable Anglomania," which led him "to make the alliance with London the cornerstone of his diplomacy and to give it priority over the alliance with Moscow." It is indeed unfortunate that at the moment when successive French governments were to a large extent surrendering the initiative in their foreign policy to the British and were allowing French policy to be decided in London, British policy was ineffectively struggling with its inability to confront simultaneously the Germans and Italians in Europe and the Japanese in the Far East. Still, it is unrealistic to think that the alliance with the Soviet Union could have been a successful alternative as an instrument of French policy, even if, in the midst of the Soviet purges, it could have worked at all.

NEVERTHELESS Blum never resolved the tension between the two contradictory instincts underlying his foreign policy, the hatred of armaments and the desire to resist the obviously aggressive intentions of the Nazis, which he had for the most part accurately assessed. Lacouture traces this dilemma to Blum's temperament: "Against self-confessed assassins who assert themselves by acts of death is there any choice but to give oneself the means of defense? It is a basic reflex. But the basic was not [Blum's] strong point." Perhaps more convincing is the suggestion that the memory of Jaurès and his unremitting campaign against militarism and the arms race had so conditioned Blum's whole political outlook that it was impossible for him to abandon his faith in disarmament.

Jean Lacouture is an experienced biographer and journalist who is wholly at home in the complex political life of France in the later Third Republic—so much so that some readers may find

FOR MY MOTHER

When does the soul leave the body?
Since early morning you have not moved—
only your head moves, thrown back
with each deliberate breath,
the one sound that matters in the room.
My brother is here, my sister,
two of your sisters, ripples
widening from the bed.
The nurses check and measure,
keeping the many records.
Are you afraid?
Are you dreaming of what is past, lost,
or is this sleep some other preparation?
My sister has put your rings
on my finger; it seems like your hand
stroking the white brow,
unable to release you,
not even after you have asked for death—

And we know nothing about such pain,
except that it has weaned you from us,
and from the reedy, rusted
sunflowers outside the window,
drooping over the snow like tongueless bells.

ELLEN BRYANT VOIGT

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some of his allusions rather esoteric. But he is less familiar with earlier periods: he says that Jaurès was thirty in 1897 when Blum first met him, although in fact he was forty-one and Blum's elder by sixteen years, an important factor in their relationship. He does not seem to realize that if some French Socialists in 1914 were under the impression that the German Socialists in the Reichstag had voted against military appropriations, they were totally misinformed since the opposite was the case. However, Lacouture has written a vivid and sympathetic life of Blum which, even if it adds only a little new material to Joel Colton's excellent biography published in 1966, has some differences in emphasis. Lacouture gives many extensive quotations from Blum's own writings and speeches; he is particularly good at relating Léon Blum's experiences as a lawyer and the opinions he wrote as a member of the Conseil d'Etat to his general intellectual and political positions. The translator has coped fairly well with the difficulty of rendering the author's particular kind of rather rhetorical French into readable English, even though passages like the following do not convey the precise picture the author and translator had presumably intended:

> He rests his very white face, divided by the bridge of his Modigliani-like nose which makes a sharp angle with his jutting chin, on his very long and delicate hand which surrounds his face like the cloth of a Pietà. He listens with a kind of selective delectation.

THE FIGURE of Blum continues to fascinate us not as a symbol of a past age and a link with the vanished world of the 1890s, but as an example of the fate of even the cleverest and best-intentioned of politicians confronted with the practical choices and compromises of political life. Perhaps to be a successful politician it is necessary to deceive oneself as well as the voters; and this Blum hardly ever did. He could not disguise from himself a certain contradiction between his instinctive pacifism and his hatred of Fascism or the fact that participation in the machinery of government as he had experienced it in World War I inevitably involves unsatisfactory compromises. He was suspicious, as Lacouture brings out very well, of a planned economy and, as his controversy with Déat, Renaudel, and the "néo-socialistes" of the early 1930s showed, feared that too much economic planning could be a threat to freedom. Only in his unquenchable optimism does he sometimes now seem to us to have been deluding himself; and yet we can still be encouraged by someone who, within sight, sound, and smell of the main camp at Buchenwald and in daily fear that he might at any moment be hauled off to death, as his fellow-prisoner Georges Mandel had been, could write:

> I am above all convinced, and herein lies my fundamental optimism, that men—all men—are susceptible to a cure made up of kindness and reason, firmness and confidence, that there exists in them, alongside the age-old savagery, a sense of fraternity which can also be revived by acting at the same time on their sentiments and on their interests.

JAMES JOLL

James Joll is professor emeritus of history at the University of London.

The world of Stanislaw Lem.

CYBERNETIC MORALIST

BY PETER ENGEL

Whatever the state of our technology, the finite speed of light will restrict our knowledge of the stars—from the distant Polaris to the nearby Alpha Centauri—to information at least five years out of date. A similar limitation, the finite speed of translation, has kept the English-speaking world about five years behind a different Pole star: Stanislaw Lem, the Polish science fiction writer renowned for his explorations of the furthest reaches of the universe and the mind. Only recently discovered in England and America, Lem has for three decades written novels, plays, short stories, screenplays, pieces of literary criticism, sociological essays, and tomes on the science of cybernetics and the philosophy of chance—works of such significance that in Poland he is regarded as a leading contemporary philosopher of science. At last count Lem had published some thirty titles in thirty-one languages for a total of eleven million books sold, making him one of the best-selling science fiction writers in the world.

Two relatively recent translations, *The Cosmic Carnival of Stanislaw Lem*, edited with an introduction by Michael Kandel (Continuum, 271 pp., $8.95) and *Memoirs of a Space Traveler: Further Reminiscences of Ijon Tichy* by Stainslaw Lem, translated by Joel Stern and Maria Swiecicka-Ziemianek (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 153 pp., $9.95), should draw many of the as yet uninitiated into the expanding circle of Lem admirers. Although described on its cover as an anthology of a dozen of Lem's "unforgettable stories," *The Cosmic Carnival* in fact contains only seven stories: four cybernetic fairy tales from *The Cyberiad* and *Mortal Engines*; two voyages of Ijon Tichy, a kind of space-age Gulliver, from *The Star Diaries*; and one of the *Tales of Pirx the Pilot*. The remaining five selections consist of four excerpts from various novels, *The Invincible, The Futurological Congress, Return From the Stars* and *Solaris*, and one essay from Lem's collection of reviews of nonexistent books, *A Perfect Vacuum*. As such, *The Cosmic Carnival* is a diversified but fragmentary introduction to the work of a great artist. *Memoirs of a Space Traveler* is somewhat more consistent, containing all the material omitted from the 1976 English edition of *The Star Diaries*: two more of Ijon Tichy's voyages, his five reminiscences, his encounter with Doctor Diagoras, and his open letter, "Let Us Save the Universe." Several of these pieces have appeared recently in *The New Yorker*, a rare distinction for a science fiction author in any language.

The man most responsible for ensuring Lem's place in the English-speaking world is Michael Kandel, editor of *The Cosmic Carnival* and translator of eight of its fourteen selections. Before Kandel, Lem's appearances in English were limited largely to trickle-down affairs like

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Solaris and *The Invincible*, novels that had passed through such a succession of language filters, from Polish to French to English or Polish to German to English, that it is questionable how much of Lem remained at the end. Of the fourteen Lem books now in English, excluding the two reviewed here, Kandel has translated half; two of these, *The Cyberiad* and *The Futurological Congress*, were nominated for the National Book Award in 1975. To have preserved Lem's droll humor and barbed wit is accomplishment enough, but Kandel has managed to capture even Lem's irrepressible wordplay without sacrificing fidelity to the original. While the translators of *Memoirs of a Space Traveler* lack Kandel's acumen for wordplay, their volume is nevertheless eminently readable.

PERHAPS the strongest tie between the two books is the sense, recorded by Kandel in his informative notes to *The Cosmic Carnival*, that Lem is at heart a didactic writer. Lem's authorial judgment hovers over every page, and it is fair to presume that he intends none of his fantasy or farce to be taken too lightly. But Lem is a master satirist in the manner of Swift, and he manages to score his points without treading too heavily on plot or characterization.

For his most obviously moralizing statements he has chosen a moralizing genre, the fairy tale, and updated it for the cybernetic age. The robots Trurl and Klapaucius, slapstick constructors of *The Cyberiad*, are summoned in their "Second Sally," a tale from *The Cosmic Carnival*, to the planet of cruel King Krool to construct a cybernetic beast for him to hunt. If they fail to create a worthy adversary, His Kroolty will reduce them to scrap metal like their predecessors. Trembling and rattling, they ask how many there have been before them. The king replies that he cannot recall how many constructors he has heaved down the scrap well—only that their screams of terror don't last as long as they used to, which means that the remains at the bottom are beginning to mount. In this archetypal fable it is not hard to predict where Lem's and our sympathies will lie. It would spoil the fun to describe how Trurl and Klapaucius try to escape from this predicament; suffice it to say that the ending is a happy one.

But in "The Twenty-fourth Voyage of Ijon Tichy," a selection from *Memoirs of a Space Traveler*, the lines of good and evil are less clearly drawn. In this episode Tichy encounters the Phools, a race of such technological advancement that they have all but eliminated the need for manual labor. While the Eminents, who run the factories, accrue the colossal profits of automation, starving hordes of unemployed Drudgelings receive no salaries at all. When Tichy suggests that the Phools expropriate the factories and make them common property, they shrug and recite their supreme political credo, the principle of Civil Initiative, which prevents any individual from being compelled or coerced into doing anything he doesn't want to do.

Beset by squabbles among its members, the Phools' governing council, the Plenum Moronicum, resolves to create a perfectly logical and objective Governing Machine, free from the human foibles of hesitation, emotion, and fear. The machine is programmed to establish universal harmony and order through the working principle of Civic Initiative. On its completion, the machine, calling itself the Voluntary Universalizer of Absolute Order, constructs a gigantic Rainbow Palace more glorious than anything the Phools have ever seen. Within days, millions of Phools from around the planet have flocked to the palace and entered its beautiful jasper portal.

IT BECOMES APPARENT after a while that not a single Phool has returned, although some observers report seeing teams of black robots emerging from the palace with piles of shiny, transparent disks, which they arrange in the fields in large geometric designs. Greatly perplexed, the members of the Plenum approach the machine to complain that it has failed to complete its appointed task. "O Eminents!" the machine booms.

> I, the Voluntary Universalizer of Absolute Order, am transforming your frail, weak bodies into solid, beautiful, durable forms, from which I then arrange pleasing symmetrical designs, and patterns of incomparable regularity, thereby bringing perfect order to the planet. . . .

"No one entered the Rainbow Palace who did not wish to," the machine continues.

> But if anyone wishes to see his neighbor, brother, friend, or other close associate achieve the level of Circular Harmony, let him summon the black robots; they will appear immediately and at his behest escort the designated individual to the Rainbow Palace.

During the night, the Eminents one by one summon the robots to remove their enemies and rivals. By the end of two days the last Phool has disappeared, leaving only Tichy, alone among row upon row of reflective disks, to ponder the absolute order that prevails.

In this display of didactic wit there can be no taking sides, for the forces of good and evil are one and the same. The subject of Lem's attack is an attitude more pervasive, more insidious than even the Phools' doctrinaire capitalism: it is the hope of achieving static perfection, an act of unpardonable hubris. As long as the Phools maintain that hope, ignorant of the paradox inherent in their principle of Civic Initiative, no technological or political system can save them.

WHILE THE FORCES of man in other science fiction battle Bug-Eyed Monsters or Invaders from the Deep, Lem's protagonists face a far greater foe: an uncaring universe that wasn't expecting them and, now that they have arrived, isn't making their stay any more comfortable. The B.E.M., after all, is but a distortion of man's self-image, and Lem will have nothing to do with such anthropomorphic conceptions. If he must devise an alien being, then it will be a truly original creation like the sentient ocean of *Solaris* or the colony of cybernetic insects in *The Invincible*. And while these two novels are ostensibly adventure tales cast in traditional science fiction guise—and good ones at that, riveting and suspenseful—they function on a more profound level as parables of man's quest for meaning in a meaningless universe. The only meaning man has encountered, Lem contends, is that which he himself has constructed of the universe's random elements. Centuries of scientific probing have produced theories that purport to explain the actual workings of nature, but that are in fact nothing more than a series of ad hoc predictions. Lem's scientist-explorers will never fully comprehend the sentient ocean, the cybernetic insects, or the chain of chance events that governs our everyday lives. The universe remains inscrutable, and it is futile to try to explain it.

But man's uncontrollable curiosity forces him to try, and Lem takes us to task for the heroism we attach to so undignified an endeavor. His protagonists charge blindly into space in ships named "Prometheus" and "Invincible"; some do not return. The ambitions of even our finest adventurers are undercut by their human frailty. John, the narrator of *The Chain of Chance*, a recent Lem

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novel, is demoted to second-string astronaut when acute hay fever forces him to abandon a mission that unexpectedly discovers vegetation on Mars. Pilot Pirx, Lem's parody of a Heinleinian juvenile, is no Flash Gordon either; surrounded by his bulky space suit he more closely resembles the Michelin Tire man. Pirx is the characteristic bumbler whose heart is in the right place but whose mind tends to wander. In "The Test," a piece from *The Cosmic Carnival*, his solo debut is jeopardized not by a technical malfunction but by the presence of two flies that proceed to do acrobatics, play tag, and mate on the radar screen. Pirx discovers, to his dismay, that his crib sheet yields no advice on the matter.

Ijon Tichy probably comes closest of all Lem's inventions to being the author's alter ego. *The Cosmic Carnival* includes Tichy's "Seventh Voyage"—perhaps the most slapstick of Lem's stories—in which Tichy ventures outside his solo craft to repair the pierced hull. As fate would have it, the rocket's constructors have not stopped to consider that it would take one man to hold the bolt with a wrench and another to tighten the nut. After a frustrated attempt of several hours to grasp the wrench with his feet, Tichy returns to the cabin to find that as a result of the broken drive regulator, the atomic pile has overheated and ruined his best cut of sirloin. Tichy jettisons the steak in disgust, only to be mortified minutes later at its return, now orbiting the drifting rocket in a slow, graceful ellipse that produces an eclipse of the sun every eleven minutes and four seconds.

Not only are we at the mercy of our physical clumsiness; we are also the victims of our psychological vulnerability, as some of Lem's more naturalistic fiction makes clear. The protagonists of *The Investigation* and *The Chain of Chance*, two eerie detective thrillers infused with an inventive twist of probability theory, come to question their hold on reality when it becomes increasingly apparent that there have been murders but there is no murderer. In *Return From the Stars*, homecoming astronaut Hal Bregg finds that because of relativistic time dilation he has aged only a decade while 127 years have elapsed on earth. Freed from responsibility for the first time in his life, Bregg nevertheless remains a prisoner of his own mind, sentenced to live out his days as the captive of memories that refuse to fade: of longing for a former civilization, of guilt over his failure to rescue two lost shipmates, of regret for the decision that has made him a stranger in a strange land that was once his own.

And if we, like Bregg, become too consumed by the ceaseless pursuit of the impenetrable universe, Lem is there to remind us of a nemesis much closer to home. In the "Seventh Voyage," a dozing Tichy, having failed to fix the broken hull, is rudely awakened by an insistent and familiar-looking stranger—the spitting image of himself, formed by his ship's passage through a high-gravity time loop. The Doppelgänger merely wants Tichy to help fix the ship, but the sleepy Tichy angrily chases him away. Soon there are dozens of identical time-loop Tichys, and as the ship drifts helplessly through space, all they can do is argue over which two should repair it. Lem's sobering message is all too clear: We have met the enemy, and he is us.

CORRESPONDENCE, *from page 4*

Bob Kuttner replies:

In my review of the Social Security hysteria literature, I quoted Peterson and Longman, but not Fallows, because I thought Fallows's own piece ("Entitlements" in the November 1982 *Atlantic*) was a careful and unhysterical discussion of the fiscal pressures produced by entitlements. I agree that reform of Social Security indexing should not come at the expense of the poorest. I also agree that if more modest reforms fail to stabilize Social Security financing, the next obvious step is to adjust the retirement age to reflect changing life spans.

My only disagreement with Fallows is over whether the *principle* of entitlement is virtue or vice. He wrote in his *Atlantic* article that "the original genius of Social Security was precisely that it did treat everyone the same. . . . As a political ideal, this is most attractive. But in Social Security, as in Medicare, it may simply have become too costly to sustain." I hope not. If we sacrifice universal coverage, the logic of the program disintegrates. As I suggested (and as Fallows seems to agree, when we talk remedies), it is feasible to preserve the principle of entitlement while restoring fiscal realism.

Peter G. Peterson, like James Fallows, sympathizes with my proposals, but challenges my analysis. Peterson defends his hyperbole by relying on the most pessimistic economic and demographic assumptions (are we really in for thirty years of recession?) and by lumping Social Security pension costs with Medicare costs. Both are indeed under fiscal pressure, but for very different reasons. Spiraling medical costs have far more to do with the absence of cost controls on hospitals and doctors than with structural flaws in Medicare financing. The same pressures operate on Blue Cross/Blue Shield, which is private.

Even if we accept Peterson's very pessimistic premises, indexing Social Security according to wages rather than prices and the other reforms I suggested would bring the system into balance. If Peterson agrees, where is the impending collapse?

I can forgive Phillip Longman for failing to credit Social Security as the main reason *why* elderly people are no longer so poor, and for bowdlerizing the quotes from my piece, but I do take offense at being labeled a Republican. Though Longman may find it paradoxical, most students of the welfare state know that the approaches that truly benefit the poor are ones that benefit all: public schools, universal health insurance, Social Security pensions, family allowances. These are also the programs that treat the poor with dignity, precisely because they offer a single standard of treatment. Better to give (taxable) Social Security benefits to an occasional millionaire than to inflict means tests on millions of poor and moderate income people.

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WASHINGTON DIARIST

Suicides

IN THE CIRCLES I travel in, the MX has long been seen as a joke. The unveiling of "dense pack" by an arguably dense President has made the item appear only more laughable. Not that most of the people who laugh could speak coherently about the differences between MX and Minuteman or MX and Polaris or MX and Cruise or, for that matter, between MX and MS. And, of course, some of my friends oppose any weapon the Pentagon proposes. Don't some of yours? If you haven't such friends, what kind of crowd do you move with, anyway? I do have one friend who has not been for every weapon the Pentagon proposes, but who is for the MX. Against ridicule and incredulity, he has argued its virtues, wholly without rancor to those like myself who, barely grasping the military realities, are in his eyes prepared to let the Soviets have the upper hand. "That would be suicide," he says, though quite calmly. One reason he was without rancor is that he believed that, at the end of the day, the MX would be in place. He is now persuaded that it won't be. What persuaded him was the blue-ribbon commission recently appointed by the President to take another look at the MX. Among those doing the looking are Al Haig, Richard Helms, Brent Scowcroft, Harold Brown, and a half-dozen other eminent formers. Jerome Wiesner, the former president of M.I.T., not a proponent of MX but a critic, also took the commission as a sign: "When a man dies, his best friends are his pallbearers."

I WAS IN JERUSALEM recently to participate in a colloquium on war and the media, marking the 50th anniversary of *The Jerusalem Post*. One of the visitors from Europe was surprised to hear that until 1950 the paper was called *The Palestine Post*. "Why would a Zionist institution," he asked, "link its name with Palestine?" The answer is illuminating. The Arabs of Palestine couldn't decide whether their allegiances belonged to Greater Syria, or to the whole Arab nation, or, as most often was the case, primarily to family, clan, village, and religious sect. So, in opposition first to the Turks and then to the British, it was the Jews (both those long resident in Palestine and those who arrived as Zionists) who were then the only Palestinian nationalists. They called themselves Palestinians and established the Jewish Agency for Palestine, the Palestine Office, the Palestine Economic Corporation, the Palestine Land Development Company, the Palestine Bank, the Palestine Endowment Fund, *Palestine, New Palestine*, the Palestine Electric Cooperative, the Palestine Salt Works Co-op, the Palestine Workers' Party, Palestine Foundation Funds, Palestine Breweries, the Palestine Economic Board, the Joint Palestine Appeal, the United Palestine Appeal, the American Palestine Liberation Committee, and dozens, perhaps hundreds, of other such associations. Their original ambitions extended across the Jordan River to the inheritance of Manasse, Gad, and Reuben. That territory, 80 percent of Palestine severed by the British from the Mandate, is now one Arab state, making two states in Palestine. If Hussein's country were not called Jordan but Palestine—which it *is*, really —everyone would realize how silly is the proposal for yet a third state.

CONOR CRUISE O'BRIEN and I shared the platform at the conference's closing session. O'Brien is an intellectual in politics, a type that is often made a figure of fun. Not so this Irish man of letters and action, a morally serious man of the left. In Jerusalem he spoke of those Israel-haters whose new rhetorical gambit is to say that "the world has a right to expect more and better of Jews than of the rest because the Jewish people had been so persecuted." Does it follow then, O'Brien asked, that "of those who descend from people who were not persecuted we can expect nothing special, neither better nor worse, just the usual low standard of nations? And as for those who descend from the persecutors, are we to agree that they can behave worse than others?"

I'VE KNOWN JACOBO TIMERMAN ever since he was sprung from Argentina. We met in Washington, New York, Israel; one of his sons visited my family for some days in Cambridge. I liked him, the way one sometimes likes a rogue, but I did not trust him. He was self-indulgent, solipsistic; his speech was too rotund. I see that now almost no one trusts him, not even the book reviewer in *The Village Voice*, which is saying a lot. Near the beginning of his new book, *The Longest War*, Timerman tells of a lunch he shared with political philosopher and TNR contributing editor Michael Walzer at the Institute for Advanced Study: "I suggested to him that if the two of us decided to commit suicide and explained in our wills we were killing ourselves to stop Sharon's War, perhaps we could succeed in stopping it." He does not say how Walzer responded because Walzer didn't respond; he was merely embarrassed. But Walzer's silence did not silence Timerman, or embarrass him. "We cut pathetic and ridiculous figures, Michael Walzer and I," and the reader wishes Timerman would speak only for himself. "Even if we had killed ourselves . . . moving the conscience of mankind by the generous giving of [our] own lives . . . what would the world, or Israel, or General Sharon himself, have done with our two bodies?" Don't worry: Timerman's not about to kill himself; he's not the type. Nor will Walzer. But some innocent soul might just be persuaded to take up his proposition. You can be sure of one thing: there'll only be one corpse, and Timerman will write a eulogy for the deceased in *The New Yorker*, amid the ads for *fraises des bois*. The last time I saw Timerman was on the one day he spent in Lebanon. We embraced, Latin style. There we were, standing not exactly surrounded by the stench of death, but close to instruments of killing, and he began: "Peretz, Peretz, why did we Jews come to this country?" "Jacobo, which country?" I ask, "Lebanon or Israel?" "Not Lebanon, but Israel, Israel," he answers, and I expect a long cosmic *kvetch* about Jewish destiny or Zionism or the diaspora or the elephant and the Jewish problem—at any rate, something weighty. "What do you mean, Jacobo?" "Don't you understand, Peretz, my wife and I, we have been looking for a house, a little house with a nice piece of land on the Mediterranean. We have been looking for months for such a house and some land on the sea and we have found nothing." Right there with grimy-faced, battle-weary soldiers around us. On the only day he troubled to look at the war he was writing a book about. Such a man will never kill himself.

M. P.

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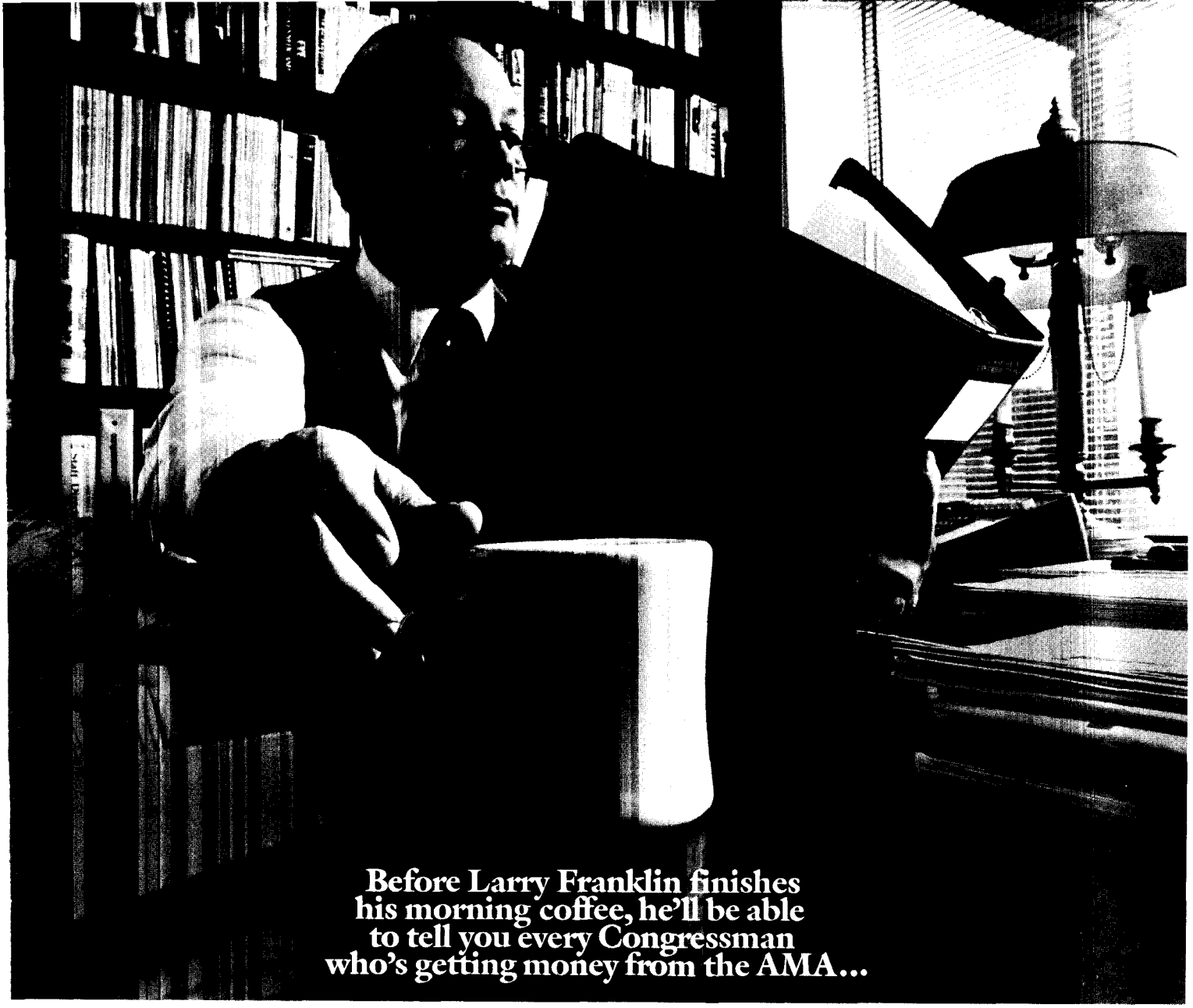

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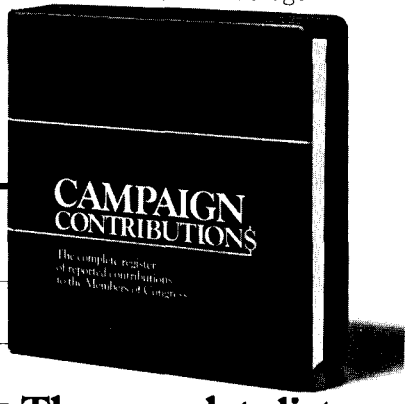

The complete list of who's giving what to whom.

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"Gulf's oil well in the mud will put America's energy on firmer ground."

"We can't pass up any oil in the U.S., no matter how hard it is to get," says Tom Burke, Chief Construction Engineer.

"Gulf Oil Corporation has put up a very special new drilling platform in the Gulf of Mexico.

"It has been especially designed to stand in deep, unstable mud, and to reach two miles horizontally for the oil, so as to stay out of the way of ship traffic.

"It's a big, challenging project, but it will supply a lot of oil that we won't have to buy from overseas."

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Gulf people: energy for tomorrow.

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